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ROADMENDING ON THE SACRED WAY

ROADMENDING ON THE SACRED WAY

SUGGESTIONS TO THE MODERN READER
OF MATTHEW, MARK AND LUKE

BY

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PREFACE

RUMOURS reach us who are not scholars, which suggest that the scholars hold a commission like that of the Prophet Jeremiah, "to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow." We have an uncomfortable sense that they have not his authority "to build and to plant."

In these essays I have tried to put before the reader some positive results of their work. But I have deliberately left untouched the Two Transcendent Miracles of the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. It seems to me that these involve an argument which does not belong to the special department of Higher Criticism.

I have asked to be listened to while I speak of the road-mending of a part only of this greatest of all roads.

I believe that many men are unduly perplexed. They are vaguely aware of a general dubiousness. The road is rumoured to be impassable, it is thought there is no "sound going" that way, and men go other ways.

And I say, Leave this general vague uncertainty and look with me at this particular part of the road, to begin

with. Here, at any rate, I do not find the confusion which is imagined. Try this part of the Christian argument, wherever it may lead. Hear what they are saying who have questioned most closely the values of our St. Matthew and St. Mark and St. Luke. Give me two hours, and test for yourself this furlong of the Sacred Way.

J. M. C. C.

25th November, 1923.

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I

THE LIGHT OF MEN

He was not ashamed to call them brethren.

THE Christian belief is that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth." Very God of Very God, we say, He was made Man.

The highest that we can know is that Spiritual Beauty, that Grace which was seen in our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no wonder or power intelligible to us, higher than that. And that can only be known to us in a Human life and voice and face and form.

In the human form, in a human life, we can see something which we cannot know in the sun's light or the shining of the morning star, in the winds and the open skies, or the storms of lightning and thunder, or the snow. In the sea and the everlasting hills and "the green things upon the earth" and all the creatures, life lower and higher, from simplest, lowest forms up to all the most wonderful and complex, in winter and spring and summer and autumn, in our fellow creatures on the earth, the lamb, the tiger, or the quick fishes, or the birds flying,—such power, such wonder, such grace as we find in all these are lower than the Spiritual. Human things mean more than these. It is through human things that we must know the highest,

For Mercy has a human heart,
Pity a human face,
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

William Blake makes us listen again to that eternal Christian truth by saying it in his own way, in fresh child-like words.

John Milton, going over the losses that attend blindness, speaks of "the human face divine." We know Blake's reverence for Milton, and here perhaps he echoes Milton's words. But what he says goes far beyond what Milton said. There are moods in which people feel that the "human face" is "the human face divine" and that the "human form" is "the human form divine," adoring what will change and pass away. But Blake is saying that, through this which a Lover or a Mother or a Poet sees, we may find ourselves seeing what does not change and pass away. Under human forms, if anywhere at all, man can see the Spirit, can know the Eternal and the Divine.

And so, if God is going to shew Himself to us, it cannot be through anything lower than human, for what is lower cannot say it to us; and it cannot be through anything higher than human, for what is higher would speak a language which we do not know.

God must be Incarnate if He would tell us all we can know about Him. The Word must be made flesh. God of God, He was made Man. Here we are seeing by the clearest light which our eyes can bear. Higher would be "dark with excess of light." Lower would be too dim to light us to see all that we have eyes to see.

For indeed the stars are low and little, and the everlasting hills are transient, and the seas and the islands and all that lives and moves there are insignificant compared to the human spirit, which is known in Christ: in his human heart, and human face, and human form divine:

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is God, our Father dear,
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is man, His child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,
Pity a human face,
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

That is the highest we can know. And as we look and listen, we feel it is God speaking to us.

It is its own evidence that it is the highest. It cannot be put to silence by anything that is on a lower level. The winds can blow out the lamps in the street: they cannot blow out the stars. Over and over again we find contradictions of that Word in our own natures, in our circumstances, in past history, or in the wide world as we look out across it. But the Word is what It is, whatever we may make the world look like.

“There may be many that say: who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up: the light of Thy Countenance upon us.” One wild flower in a wilderness, one of Christ’s lilies of the field, blowing, on a whole hillside of desolate rocks, would still be itself, living and lovely. It would be life in that bleak scene.

And Christ’s Life is there in human history. There we have seen, in the human heart and face and form, something which is, self-evidently, spiritual and eternal.

We behold that Flesh; and in it, the Word which is God, makes itself known to us. In it, the Light which is God is mirrored for us. In other human lives, human life was like the pool of waters that are moved, trying to reflect the sky. Glimpses and glances sway and leap on the face of the water. Hints dart, brokenly. A confused reflection suggests something, and then is lost again.

Other human life, with all its inhumanities, could not

reflect as in a clear glass the face of heaven. But here is the perfect human life. It is perfectly human. It is a flawless mirror which reflects the face of the sky that is over it. Man, there, is answering God. We look into the Human and we see the Divine reflected there.

Something like that is our Infallible Christian Truth : our Truth which does not fail us. That Word which came, we say, into the straw and dirt of the stable, lit by the stable-lantern ; that little child born, that little human form, at whose coming the Morning Stars sang together and all the Sons of God shouted for joy : that Word is saying Itself still, often in the unlikely places of our experience.

It has spoken Itself to men in human ways ; through the human acts and speech of the Church of Christ ; through human forms and customs, through human books. These have been the ways by which It came to men and men came to It.

You might call all these the Way of the Spirit, the Road of Life.

And we may look into the traditions, the inheritance of customs, the written books or the human influences, and try to clear our thoughts about them. We may want to know better what they mean to us. We may need to mend our road in places, so that we, wayfaring men, though fools, may not err therein. Now to me it seems that such a road-mending is going on to-day in certain places of the road. I want to clear, if I may, for a reader here and there, the reader's thoughts about the road : or rather the road of thought on which the reader goes.

It is common to feel a vague mistrust of the soundness of the evidence we have for the Gospel Story. The road with which Christians have to do is a long one. The writer's mind has been busy over a short length of it. He is not speaking

of more than that length. He is not now concerning himself with many of the greatest questions which ask themselves about it. He is only thinking, This part of the Christian Road of Thought is not the Via Mala some travellers think it. He is a road-mender (or perhaps a road-user, rather) who says, This quarter of a mile is not worse, but better going than you think. And he puts out this book with this confidence—that nothing which can be truly said of the Humanity of Jesus of Nazareth can injure the sense of the Divinity of which we are aware as we come near Him : of which we are the more aware, the nearer we come to Him.

You might say it this way : we have been taught that the Word which was God was made Man. It would not have been more divine, but less divine, and more undivine, to have been made less wholly Man. The more Human the Lord is, the more Divine He is. And it is "what He is" that is our greatest possession, our unfailing truth. If someone does not see Miracle in His being what He was, other miracles (more or fewer) will help little. The historical evidence for other miracles will be what it will be. The evidence will establish what it has force to establish.

Behind all these questions, Dante's answer still holds. Let me read that, across six hundred years.

Dante, who has come to the Sky of the Stars, is to answer St. Peter concerning the faith that is in him. As a bachelor arms himself and does not speak, waiting for the master, the examiner, to put his question, so did I, he says, arm myself with every reason. Beatrice encourages. Dante makes his answers. St. Peter cross-examines.

"And on what is your Faith founded?"

"It is on the rain, the shower of the Holy Spirit which falls everywhere on the old and the new parchments." You could, (I suppose he means,) as little deny the Inspiration

of the Old and New Testaments, as you could deny the greenness of the April meadows after rain.

St. Peter speaks again. (I have turned to Canto xxiv of the *Paradiso*.)

"Why do you hold these Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, *divina favella*?"

Dante answers: "The proof I trust is the works that followed, *l'opere seguite*. Nature has no fire or iron or hammer or anvil in her smithy to beat out such works as those."

"But" (St. Peter asks) "what proof have you that there ever were such works? It is the very book whose trustworthiness is in question which is your only evidence for the miracles, miracles which you offer as evidence that the book is trustworthy." If the New Testament is discredited (that is) the miracles recorded in the New Testament don't help.

Dante answers that if the world turned to Christianity without miracles, the miracle of that conversion of the world is itself more wonderful: more than a hundredfold more wonderful than any other Christian miracle.

Let no reader fear either way out of this dilemma. We desire only the true way out of it. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is its own evidence. No change in our way of reading the accounts of Its gracious Coming can change the wonder of what It is or the fact that It has come into the world.

II

FAITH'S NEW QUESTIONS

If the sun and moon should doubt
They'd immediately go out.—*Blake*.

I WAS standing once looking at the west front of Lincoln Cathedral, when an old man came up, clearly a man with a liking for talking and time to indulge in it. He came and stood beside me.

"A very old building," he said.

I answered that I understood it to be of great antiquity.

"And some parts of it are older even than others," he went on.

My guide-book had assured me already that this is so.

"The oldest part," he said, "is called Saxon and the other part is called Roman."

It was not what the guide-book said, but I acquiesced.

"And those," he told me, pointing to the statues of Edward III and, I think, ten other kings, "are Christ and the Twelve Apostles."

The numbers did not seem to tally ; but I am not one of those who plunge foolhardily into an argument. "You live in Lincoln?" I asked. And he answered at some length. "Then," I answered, "you should know." He assured me that he did.

He was going away, but he turned back with an impressive afterthought. "And to think," said he, "that all this work was done when wages were a penny a day."

"Most remarkable," said I. "*Most* remarkable. It is just like the wages we read of in the Scriptures."

A look of great knowingness came over his kindly old face. "That," said he, "is where I got it from," and went away looking very happy and very affectionate towards his dear Cathedral.

Now I would sooner have that old man's love of Lincoln Cathedral, even with his confusion of mind with regard to its history: I would sooner have that than any scientifically accurate knowledge you could give me about the Norman of 1074 and 1160 and the wages paid by Bishop Remigius and Bishop Alexander the Magnificent, if I could only be well informed, on the condition that my heart was to be cold while my head was clear. After all, the great thing is to love what is lovable. But if my kindly old friend had been younger, there would still have been a better kind of affection, surely, possible for him than that affection of his which would have been seriously disturbed, no doubt, if anyone had made him count the eleven statues, for example, and reduced his Apostles to Plantagenet Kings.

There is a living interest in studying the stones and making them tell you their true story—in facing and trying to answer the questions: What stood here at the first, and what was changed, and what was added, and what has been restored, replaced, refaced? The man who knows what can be known of all this, will have a feeling for his beloved minster which needn't be afraid of anything that can be told him about it. You will not have to treat his mind as a kind of invalid. You won't have to be very careful not to disturb a mistaken belief which has now become almost a religion to him. The old man would be quite upset if you unsettled his belief that his Cathedral was built in a way in which, as a matter of fact, it was not built.

At any question as to his views about that, I imagine him becoming very uneasy—looking for friendliness he had come upon an enemy. You must leave him where he is because

. . . because he wants to be left in peace to believe something, *whether it is true or not*. If you tested the trustworthiness of his convictions, they would give way. If you were heartless enough to break them down, he would go away sadly wounded.

And yet Lincoln Cathedral can be trusted. A man need only open his eyes and look, to see that. It needs no making it out to be something which it isn't. It is Lincoln Cathedral.

And the healthiest belief in Lincoln Cathedral would surely say : None of your ominously tactful tenderness with any easily-injured opinions of mine about it, please ! Let it be what it is. Let my head be clear. I can trust my heart to catch no cold. And the clearer I see, the more I'll wonder.

I have written this as though I were thinking about Lincoln Cathedral, but what I have really in mind, is the New Testament. For I fancy that a great number of persons nowadays have an uneasy sense that, somehow, the worth of the New Testament is under suspicion. And minds are divided in themselves. Part of me says, "Don't disturb my old love for the good Book." And part of me *is* disturbed, in spite of me, "Is the Book all that I believe it to be ? " And people go different ways. Some shoo away the doubts and resent the raising of any question as to the Four Gospels being what we have "always known" they were : the work of St. Matthew himself and St. Mark himself and St. Luke himself and St. John himself.

Others say, "You don't know what to believe nowadays : you cannot read the Gospels as your grandmothers read them." And perhaps they don't read them at all.

Yet the Four Gospels are such that they can be trusted to retain our "reasonable holy and lively" reverence, when we have honestly looked to see what they are. They need no special and superstitious and darkling treatment. They

can face the full light and be seen to be of undiminished worth.

Many people have been using them now for twenty years in the light of the talk about the "Marcan Document" and "Q" and all that. And they only grow to us reasonabler, holier, livelier every year. The average man can, if he will, attend respectfully to the "New Testament Criticism," and go on reading his New Testament, finding it something different from what he supposed, but not of a more dubious, because of another kind of authority. We settle for it, perhaps, that it shall be one thing. And it is another. But the thing it is, is what, as an honest man, I want to know.

The History of the Christ, the Christ in History, began a long while ago, and has been going on all these generations, and is still going on. The History of what He is, is still making itself. I know something of its passage from Galilee and Jerusalem out into the world—to Syria—to Asia Minor—to Europe. I am in a world which is different because of that element in its history.

It came, I know, into that pagan world of Greeks and Romans, and of all the peoples who spoke Greek words and travelled along Roman roads. And it made its way through and through the Roman world. It took hold of the Roman world and changed it. In ten generations that world of people was so changed that it was willing to call itself Christian, to call Christ its Lord. And then History sees that Christian Roman world as an island with a sea of foreign peoples about it. The tide of these rises and overflows the Christian Empire with the Baptised Emperors. Vigorous new races come conquering, but come, also, under the influence of this Christian Faith. Goths and Franks and Germans and English feel the spell of the power of the

Christ. Four hundred years after the fall of Rome, there is a new Holy Roman Empire and the same Christ is there as Lord.

The sense of the Presence of Christ is there, and Mediæval Christendom arises among turbulent scenes, and grows clearer of its meaning through a long history of many vicissitudes, coarse and child-like, savage and beautiful, forgetting and remembering what it means that Christ is the Lord. And each time that it remembers, that is another incident in the history of the Historic Christ. Out of disgrace and gloom, for example, arises Clugny, say, in 1000. And again in 1100 come the Cistercians. And in 1200, you look, and St. Francis is there. It is a part of this History, that Christ was what He was to the Clugniac and the Cistercian monks, and to St. Francis of Assisi.

You cannot leave out, in considering this matter, the question what He was to Dante six hundred years ago, or to the Englishman who wrote *Piers Plowman* five hundred years ago, or to the Dutchman, Thomas à Kempis, who wrote the *Imitatio Christi*. Four hundred years ago what was He to Colet and Erasmus and More? What was He to Richard Hooker, and to Lancelot Andrews, three hundred years ago? Was there no voice nor any that answered when these called? They thought there was.

I have hurried through the great country, as it were, naming for you only a few of the tallest of the mountain peaks. You can get close to the men I have named, until they seem themselves to be telling you what the Lord is to them in their day.

And think only of the eighteenth century hymns of Isaac Watts, John Newton and John and Charles Wesley. They tell you what, two hundred years ago, Christ was to them.

And so you pass to our grandfathers and our grand-

mothers and to the heritage of experience which is passing on to us and on from us.

The attempt to say what Christ is, is made now in some four or five hundred languages. And what He is found to mean, now, among all the races, is part of the history of mankind.

It would be a strangely deficient history of mankind that tried to ignore that movement. It would be an equally deficient history of Jesus of Nazareth that ignored this fact of His influence, through and after nineteen hundred years. No intelligent person can be unconcerned when the question is, What was He when He lived on earth? What is the fountain and spring of this deep great running River? It is too important a question to be treated less truthfully than other historical questions. I want the truest picture that can be given me of the Christ as He was, on earth.

And you might say that during this generation there has arisen a desire to treat this question with a truthfulness which will not accept traditional assertions unquestioned. Our generation will look as clear-sightedly into evidences about this, as into evidences about other history which matters less. It will not rest until it has got as near as it can to seeing the original features: to knowing what was the likeness of our Christ.

You know, at the beginning of our generation, we were given books to read which took the Four Gospels as they stand. These books were too reverent in their handling of these four Gospels, to venture to question their authority in any particular. It was for the four Evangelists to speak, and for us to listen. We must not say to St. Matthew, "But St. Mark says . . ." or to St. John, "But that can hardly be. You are contradicting the other Three" . . . "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John," blessed "the bed that I lie on."

If there appeared to be any contradiction anywhere, we must remind ourselves that we are very fallible, and incapable of saying what is and what isn't possible. If we knew all, no doubt the difficulties would disappear. Who were we to pronounce upon the accuracy of inspired Evangelists? Yet you will not get to know the Truth, and you will not get to know an Evangelist, any more than you will get to know any man whatever, better, by shrinking to a very respectful and even a timid distance from him whenever he appears, and staring at him with frightened eyes. The wide-eyed look of little children gazing, and coming nearer to gaze, is more appropriate to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Meanwhile that work was going on of which the Alsatian, Albert Schweitzer, has written the story. Men of all kinds, venturing along ways of thought unexplored and foreign to their own minds and terrible and even unholy to the minds of others, were working at their question: What consistent story is to be arrived at in the survey of the New Testament evidence?

They would judge, as fearlessly as though no protest were made against them, what was Original Christianity, what was the Original Christ. They would cross-question Epistles as to their authorship; compare Acts and Galatians; take no statement for granted; keep clear before them their honest purpose of arriving at a consistent account of how this Faith arose, and Who He was at Whose Feet that Faith kneeled and in whose Name it went and won its victories.

It is a long story: two generations, three generations, asking their question and answering it many ways; trying it one way, and it wouldn't solve itself that way; beginning again and trying it another way.

Leave the questions of the New Testament as a whole;

the growing confidence in certain Epistles as St. Paul's own writing—Thessalonians, Galatians, Corinthians, Romans—dating twenty to thirty years after the death of Jesus of Nazareth. Leave all that, though it is reassuring to the mind which feels “we are uncertain about everything” to know that we need fear no disturbing uncertainties as we look there. Here is a contemporary account of what Christ was to Christians in 50 and 60 A.D. in Antioch and Tarsus and Lystra and Corinth and Ephesus. But our business is with the Gospels; the Gospels about which the old Harmonies were given us. Those critics were treating them with a very different manner of cross-examination. The orthodox writings began to be disturbed with perpetual protests, they had constantly to interrupt themselves, to protest against these enemies who had invaded our Sanctuary.

“Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations : and set up their banners for tokens.”

“They break down all the carved work . . . with axes and hammers.”

“O God, how long shall the adversary do this dishonour.”

So they seemed to us; enemies; adversaries. And, indeed, there were minds at work which were too intent on making their way in, to have regard to the holiness of the places where they set their feet. They were determined, at any cost, to arrive at a consistent and historical account: to force their way in to the secret, Who was this Christ?

It was a long story and out of it comes a new view of those Four Gospels.

They will not fit together as they lie before us. They cannot be taken to pieces and fitted into one continuous gospel. You must not string together bits of the story, a

piece from one gospel, and a piece from another, for they do not, as they stand, belong to one another. The Harmonies tried to do that. And every reader, I think, must have felt uncomfortable. It surely needed rather too much explaining. It surely involved us, too often, for example, in the same thing happening twice, only with such differences as saved the equal honour of both accounts.

Some simpler way of arriving at any conception of the Original Christ must be found.

Let me take an example from portraiture.

There hang in the Wallace Collection two portraits of the same lady: "Perdita" by Sir Joshua Reynolds and by Gainsborough. Each is a picture of a very lovely face. But as a man looked, he wondered. I wonder what the beautiful "Perdita" herself was like, when she lived. Here is Sir Joshua's "Perdita." And there is Gainsborough's. And they are different.

And connoisseurs will stand in front of "Perdita's" picture and say, "That is a very fine Sir Joshua," or again, "This Gainsborough is *great*." And where, we ask, where meanwhile is She who was there, when the Great Masters made the "very fine Sir Joshua" and "the *great* Gainsborough"? How near can we get to a sense of what She was?

You would say, I think, that the very worst way of arriving at that would be to piece together one picture out of those two pictures. To borrow some features from the one, and some from the other, and make one master portrait out of both.

Some higher way must be found. Let Sir Joshua Reynolds tell me all he can. And Gainsborough all he can. Let me learn to allow for the manner of this artist and that artist. There might create itself in my mind some sort of true idea of what the lady was. For a beautiful living face

is, after all, a spiritual thing. It has a oneness, a simplicity, a truth of its own, which will never be reached by collecting and combining a monstrous complication of incongruous elements.

It comes to this, that you must go to each source of evidence and make it give you what it can. Let it speak as clearly as it can. Let it be heard as distinctly as you can hear it. Each evidence has whatever value it has. Each witness has his own trustworthiness. We can have hope, if we examine them one by one. We can have none, if they all speak at once. And if behind these different evidences, or as I was saying, behind these different portraits, there was once One who somehow gave rise, we need not decide how, to all these evidences, One Face which these different portraits try to portray, it is a truism to say that if we are true in our dealing with the evidences, if we look sincerely at the pictures, we must be led towards the Truth of which our Gospel Writers try to tell us.

Misleading evidences will not stand as sure as true evidences. True evidences (we'll hope) will stand out clearer and clearer. Evidences which are different and yet true will not contradict, but supplement, one another. Some day men will come to the truest judgment that can be reached upon the truest evidences that can be set before them. We shall be in the position (let me say) of someone wishing to see a Life, a Character, a Spirit, as another might wish to see the face of "Perdita."

And, as that other might get the help of his Sir Joshua, and Gainsborough and perhaps Romney as well, so men, looking into the Gospels we call St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. Luke, may have three accounts to help them, from which they, by such a sense, such a spirit-sense, as is needed to perceive in such a case, might be led to such a conception as is attainable, of what it would have been like to see

Jesus of Nazareth in Galilee, and of what was, indeed, the story of His Life among men, the beginning of that History which is still "making itself."

III

THREE GOSPELS

Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged.

THERE are minds which "cannot bear" analogies. And yet it is difficult to think without their help. And, if they are bad masters, they can be useful servants of our thinking.

What analogy will you allow by which to speak of the work we are considering?

Let us speak of Road-Mending.

And if anyone says: But there can be no Road-Mending here; the street of the City is pure gold as it were transparent glass: if anyone says that, it must be answered that we are not yet in the street of the Holy City, but only on the road that leads there.

The Way is Sacred because it leads there. But it is a way which was the work of human hands. And human hands have often repaired it. Its metal is of many quarries. Its surface has worn unequally in different places.

We are attending to a Road-Mending which has gone on during the last three generations over one stretch of the Road. We are not surveying the miles before and after that one furlong. We are thinking in terms of a modest analogy. I would even say that the analogy will suit us best, if we think of the Road-menders whom some of us remember in the days of nursery walks.

You remember, perhaps, the homely seated Road-mender

of old days, with his large spectacles, and his stone-heap and his hammer, and his patient attention to individual stones, and the busy sharp clinking of his blows and occasional gentle rattling sound of the disturbed stones of the heap as they fall into new places.

I think of him doing his very modest part in the big work of keeping in use some historic road between two distant, far-famed cities. Ours was the Watling Street itself.

I am thinking of none of your modern Road-menders, in gangs, with engines to break, and engines to convey, and engines to flatten down the broken metal. The less you think of ponderous machineries in this connection, the better. For this Sacred Way is all made up of human feelings and memories and words. Every stone of this Road is a human thought.

Let us say we are looking at that length of the Sacred Way which is called the Problem of the Synoptic Gospels. We are to attend only to the Gospels according to St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke. What have the Learned Men made of these three Gospels?

We shall not be thinking at all, now, of what was once, for us, so certainly the Gospel written by St. John, the son of Zebedee. That is, surely, in some views of it "pure gold, as it were transparent glass." It is a gleaming way that winds on and up among the Holy Hills paved with great deep simple words, truths which, whoever first thought them, are true. But it lies beyond the furlong of the road where we are looking at the mending.

We are taught to talk now, of "The Fourth Gospel."

We cannot claim that any leave is given us by the scholars to say, I find this, and this, and this, written here; therefore St. John the son of Zebedee saw this happen, or heard this and this said. The kind of certainties we are to arrive at will not be like that. They will rest on other assurances.

Let us attend then to that Problem of the Synoptic Gospels.

It is a long spell of work that men have done, this comparing of St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke. It is only slowly that they have arrived at the conclusions which they have reached.

A reader will most easily see the kind of work they have been at, if he will buy a book, like Mr. J. M. Thompson's, of *The Synoptic Gospels* arranged in parallel columns. It will cost him 7s. 6d. It is in the English of the Revised Version, and has wide margins. It leaves "ample room, and verge enough the characters" of the reader's own remarks "to trace."

There, or in some similar work, in English or in Greek, he can see side by side the parallel passages of the three Gospels, and compare quite easily word with word, and sentence with sentence.

The business is to arrive at a notion of the relation of the three to one another. The decisions arrived at by the majority of those who speak with authority are of a certain kind, and it would be wilful to set out on such a study without an expectation of finding that those decisions are right decisions. But, indeed, no acceptance of their decisions, even if they are right, can be worth very much to a man who does not work out for himself his own way along the way by which they come to their decisions.

You have St. Mark, St. Matthew, St. Luke telling the same story, say. You are to look at the words of each, to see where they are word for word alike, where one differs from another, where, perhaps, all three are different.

You are to settle, first, whether it seems likely that so much likeness could be the result of Christian men agreeing—in Schools for teaching that Sacred Story—that such and such stories were the best to be told, and that they could

best be told in such and such words, and that therefore, learners would sit round and learn from their teacher, word for word, the accepted words of the common Christian tradition. Is that what will account for such a likeness as happens to lie open before me? For example :

Mark ii, 23.—And it came to pass, that he was going on the sabbath day through the corn fields ; and his disciples began as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. •

Luke vi, 1.—Now it came to pass on a sabbath, that he was going through the corn fields ; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn and did eat.

Matthew xii, 1.—At that season Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn fields ; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck ears of corn, and to eat.

There was a greatly venerated teacher who held, I think, that the likenesses could be accounted for in this way.

But Bishop Westcott's view has not survived the test of these years of looking at it to see whether it will do. It could not be claimed for it that it is now the accepted authoritative opinion.

And then there comes to my mind a saying of Bishop Westcott's which I have not seen printed.

" People ask you," he said, " to ' give ' them your opinion. No one can ' give '—with intense emphasis—' give ' another man his opinion.

" If a man asks me for five pounds that is something I could give him. But, as to an opinion, I can only give him my reasons for holding it. If the opinion is really to be *his* opinion, he himself must form it in his own mind." Something like that the Bishop said.

Well, the Authorities can guide us which way to look for a right opinion and that theory, for example, of the Church's common oral tradition has been tried and not felt to be satisfactory. It was a blind alley (it seems), and they say

to us now, "We don't advise you to go up that way to look for a way through."

They've worked away at their comparing and they have come to two main conclusions. They hold two main opinions, about the likenesses and differences of the three Gospels.

And one of these opinions which they—do not give you but—offer for other men to make their own, is that St. Mark's Greek Gospel was written down first; and that, where St. Matthew and St. Luke tell the same story in words very nearly the same, there St. Matthew and St. Luke are copying from St. Mark.

The best plan will, I suppose, be to plunge into the comparison which makes itself in almost any place at which you open your book of Parallel Gospels. Go on with the passage at which I happened to open :

Mark ii, 23-26. Matthew xii, 1-4. Luke vi, 1-4.

MARK.—And it came to pass that he was going on the sabbath day

MATTHEW.—At that time Jesus went on the sabbath

LUKE.—Now it came to pass on a sabbath that he was going

MARK, MATTHEW, LUKE—through the corn fields

MARK—and his disciples began as they went

MATTHEW—and his disciples were an hungred, and began

LUKE—and his disciples

MARK—began to pluck ears of corn

MATTHEW—began to pluck ears of corn, and to eat

LUKE—plucked the ears of corn, and did eat,

LUKE alone has :—rubbing them in their hands

MARK.—And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold

MATTHEW.—But the Pharisees, when they saw it, said unto him, Behold

LUKE.—But certain of the Pharisees said

MARK—why do they on the sabbath that which is not lawful ?

MATTHEW—thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the sabbath.

LUKE.—Why do ye that which it is not lawful to do on the sabbath day ?

MARK.—And he said unto them

MATTHEW.—But he said unto them

LUKE.—And Jesus answering them said,

MARK.—Did ye never read what David did,

MATTHEW.—Have ye not read what David did

LUKE.—Have ye not read even thus, what David did

MARK—when he had need and was an hungred,

MATTHEW—when he was an hungred

LUKE—when he was an hungred

MARK—he and they that were with him ?

MATTHEW—and they that were with him ;

LUKE—he and they that were with him ;

MARK.—How he entered into the house of God

MATTHEW—how he entered into the house of God

LUKE—how he entered into the house of God

MARK only has :—when Abiathar was high priest,

MARK—and did eat the shew-bread.

MATTHEW—and did eat the shew-bread.

LUKE—and did take and eat the shew-bread.

You see the likenesses. And as you look carefully you see the differences.

St. Mark and St. Matthew both say the disciples “ began to pluck ears of corn.” St. Luke says they “ plucked ears of corn.” St. Mark and St. Luke both say that “ it came to pass ” that Jesus went through the corn fields. St. Matthew says “ Jesus went.”

There you have St. Matthew agreeing with St. Mark once as against St. Luke. And St. Luke agreeing with St. Mark another time, as against St. Matthew. If you had to settle the matter on those two evidences alone, you would have

no difficulty. Minute as the evidences are, they are there. But, of course, the opinion has to be arrived at, by degrees, on a multitude of evidences. The opinion grows. The opinion that St. Mark is the original, has grown very strong. But it grows out of a great multitude of very minute evidences.

How small an evidence will you attend to?

St. Mark says, *And it came to pass that he was going . . . and his disciples began to pluck . . . and the Pharisees said . . . and he said . . .*

St. Matthew says, *At that season Jesus went, and his disciples were an hungred and began . . . but the Pharisees said . . . But he said unto them . . .*

St. Luke says, *Now it came to pass that he was going . . . and his disciples plucked the ears of corn . . . but certain of the Pharisees said . . . And Jesus answering them said . . .*

St. Mark goes on with "and" and "and" and "and."

St. Matthew and St. Luke each have other words, "at that season," "but," "but," "now," "but."

Those are minute differences, but they are differences, and they are there.

It happens to be on St. Mark's Day, 25th April, that I write. Yesterday I was in a wood and birds were singing, looking very small in the tall tree-tops of birches and pines: chiff-chaffs, blue-tits, chaffinches, willow-wrens. They look so small that, I know, there are people who will say the differences among them don't matter. And yet it is one of the events of the year to some people, when they hear for the first time, among the voices of the blue-tits, a chiff-chaff; among the voices of the chaffinches, a willow-wren again. The trifling difference, if you will have it that it is trifling, between one music and another, or between one wingfeather and another, means nothing less than the

difference between February and March on the one side, and April and May on the other.

I think to an attentive ear those minute distinctions which are by degrees felt to be characteristic of St. Mark, are like the notes of the chiff-chaff just returned overseas, "and heed him not, the loss is yours."

There is a freshness, a spring, a life, an originality in St. Mark which you will come, by degrees, to feel more and more, until you would be quite impatient with anyone who said that St. Mark was a shortened version of either St. Matthew or St. Luke. It would have become an opinion belonging to *you*, that to think this possible is like thinking it would be possible to have carved a living acorn out of old oak timber.

Often, of course, the verbal differences are on a bigger scale.

Even in this passage, you notice, St. Mark says that David did this, "When Abiathar was high priest."

St. Matthew and St. Luke say nothing about Abiathar. Why not?

Because as a fact, Abiathar was not High Priest, but High Priest's son. And St. Matthew and St. Luke would know that.

You have to ask whether is more likely, that St. Mark added here; or that St. Matthew and St. Luke left out? that St. Mark volunteered the error, into a copy he was making of St. Matthew or of St. Luke; or that St. Matthew and St. Luke saw as they copied St. Mark, that it was error and didn't copy it down?

Or compare St. Mark v, 25 and St. Luke viii, 43.

The comparison has a very human interest:—

ST. MARK.—And a woman which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse . . .

ST. LUKE.—And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living on physicians, and could not be healed of any, . . .

You have to decide whether St. Mark added those not very complimentary allusions to the doctors, sharpening St. Luke's account, or was it St. Luke, who, as he copied St. Mark's words, blunted some of the sharpness off their edge? The profession of St. Luke would have to be allowed for in this diagnosis.

Or compare two passages, St. Mark iii, 31-35 and St. Luke viii, 19-21, as they stand in the English of the Revised Version (and notice the words underlined) :—

ST. MARK.—And there come *his mother and his brethren*, and, standing without, they sent unto him, calling him. And a multitude was sitting about him; and they say unto him, Behold, *thy mother and thy brethren* without seek for thee.

And he answereth them, and saith, Who is *my mother and my brethren?*

And looking round on them which sat round about him, he saith, Behold, *my mother and my brethren!*

For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is *my brother, and sister, and mother.*

And ST. LUKE has :—And there came to him his mother and brethren, and they could not come to him for the crowd.

And it was told him, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to see thee.

But he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are *these* which hear the word of God, and do it.

You must decide whether it is likelier, that St. Mark, and St. Matthew too, both felt that three times was not enough to say "mother and brethren" and both added two

more repetitions in copying from St. Luke ; or that St. Luke shortened and St. Matthew (say) did not shorten what St. Mark had written with "mother and brethren" five times in it. If you will look : "*these*" in St. Luke viii, 21, does duty for a whole sentence, which some of us would unwillingly lose ; St. Mark's reminiscence of Jesus "looking round on them which sat round about him." If some man cared a good deal what Jesus thought ; if Simon Peter, for instance, had been there, it is likely that he would have remembered that look, as of a brother, if it had happened to have rested on him, at that moment.

The phrase is one of those which suggests originality in St. Mark and copying in the others.

Take another example : the Parable of the Sower.

I will write down the words which are found in both St. Mark and St. Matthew :

And he . . . them many things in parables, saying,
Behold a sower went forth to sow ; and as he sowed some seed(s) fell by the way side, and the birds came and devoured . . . and other(s) fell on the rocky . . . where . . . had not much earth ; and straightway . . . sprang up, because . . . no depth of earth : and when the sun was risen . . . scorched and because . . . had no earth . . . withered away. And others fell . . . the thorns and the thorns grew up and choked . . . and others fell into the good ground and yielded fruit a hundredfold, sixty, thirty. He that hath ears, let him hear.

St. Mark says "seeds" in the good seeds' use only and St. Matthew says "seeds" in all cases. But for the difference of singulars and plurals, the story might have been told straight on with words used in both gospels.

And then, as a contrast, compare the Parable of the Mustard Seed in St. Mark and St. Luke where the two

versions are believed to come from two different original sources. Mark iv, 30. Luke xiii, 18.

MARK.—And he said.

LUKE.—He said therefore

MARK.—How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable shall we set it forth?

LUKE.—Unto what is the kingdom of heaven like? and whereunto shall I liken it?

MARK.—It is like a grain of mustard seed,

LUKE.—It is like a grain of mustard seed,

MARK.—which, when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth,

LUKE.—which a man took, and cast in his own garden,

MARK.—yet when it is sown, groweth up,

and becometh greater than all the herbs,

and putteth out great branches;

LUKE.—and it grew, and became a tree

MARK.—So that the birds of the heaven can

lodge under the shadow thereof

LUKE.—and the birds of the heaven

lodged in the branches thereof.

St. Matthew may be watched, with both these versions before him, making a combination which uses both almost equally, but St. Mark and St. Luke could hardly have told the same parable and quoted Daniel iv at all, and used fewer words which are the same words.

Take one more example, where St. Luke and St. Matthew are both giving the Lost Sheep Parable.

I will write out St. Luke underlining the words which are the same in St. Matthew. (Luke xv, 3-7. Matthew xviii, 12, 13.)

And he spake unto them this parable saying,

What man of you, having *an hundred sheep*, and having lost *one of them*,

doth not leave *the ninety and nine* in the wilderness, *and* go after that which is lost until *he find it*?

And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, *rejoicing*. (Matthew, rejoiceth.)

And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and his neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.

I say unto you that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, *more than over ninety and nine* righteous persons *which* need no repentance.

The words in common could not possibly be fewer.

IV

SIMPLICITY OF ST. MARK

When we find a natural style, we are astonished and delighted ;
for we expected an author and we find a man.—*Pascal*.

I AM trying to feel my way towards an opinion about the verbal differences, the language, just now, rather than the subject-matter which is in the words. I suppose most English readers of the Gospel have become aware of a great simplicity in the style of St. Mark. Where St. Matthew and St. Luke have differences, St. Mark is felt, so often, to be using the more child-like speech.

Read on, where we are, at Mark iv, 1 :

“ And again he began to teach by the seaside.

And there is gathered unto him a very great multitude so that he entered into a boat and sat in the sea ; and all the multitude were by the sea on the land, and he taught them many things in parables, and said unto them in his teaching . . . ”

You notice he sets out as usual with “ and.” Two “ ands.” St. Matthew and St. Luke have each left out one of them. “ And he began to teach ” . . . in St. Mark it is so often, “ he began,” “ they began.” It is like “ straightway ” “ and straightway ” which comes so often in St. Mark. It is a mannerism of his.

“ And there is gathered.” St. Matthew says, “ And there *were* gathered.” St. Mark is constantly using the Present Tense. “ He says ” “ They say ”—that is familiar to the ear of all his readers. It may well be, for he uses it seventy times.

And then look how he uses the same word again, as he didn't hesitate to say "mother and brethren" again and again. No more than a musician would mind using the same phrase again and again.

So when the widow gave her mites, Jesus beheld the multitudes *casting* money . . . and the rich *cast* much . . . and the widow *cast* two mites . . . and He said, This widow *cast* more than all who were *casting* . . . for they *cast* of their abundance . . . but she *cast* in all she had. That is seven. St. Luke leaves out two.

Here, he "began to teach," and he "taught," and "in his teaching."

"By the seaside," "in the sea," "by the sea."

"A very great multitude," and "all the multitude."

St. Matthew's version has one "sea," two "multitudes" and no "teaching," as against St. Mark's three "seas," two "multitudes" and three "teachings."

St. Luke puts this part of the story into a dozen words: "And when a great multitude came together he spake by a parable" . . .

He has gained space. He has lost other things.

Even in the English, a reader feels that St. Mark has the advantages of a child, and the disadvantages of a child, telling a story. As you read, you seem to be following a mind that is going over what happened and seeing it again.

In my Greek Testament, the Gospel of St. Mark is divided into about a hundred larger sections or paragraphs. As you follow them down with your eyes, you would be inclined to say, They all begin with an "and." And in fact all but nine of them are so linked together. There is one place where five paragraphs begin in other ways: at chapter xiii. But that is the one passage in the gospel which (on quite other grounds, of course, than its having fewer "ands") is thought to have been added to St. Mark's Gospel. It comes

in there, separating afar the two women who are such near neighbours to one another in spirit : the poor widow who gave the two mites in the Temple and the woman who had the alabaster cruse, very costly—that is, “ it might have been sold for three hundred pence.” In between comes this chapter xiii, which uses five of the nine exceptions found in one hundred paragraphs.

Speaking generally, St. Mark has told all his story in that simple, easy style, stringing his paragraphs together as a child might (and then, and then, and then).

It is a story that runs swiftly on. It knows its business and gets on with it.

Have you noticed how it speeds along at the beginning ?

“ John came ” and said, “ There cometh one mightier than I ” and then “ Jesus came from Nazareth ” and “ was baptized.”

“ And *straightway* coming up out of the water he saw . . . ”

“ And *straightway* the Spirit driveth him forth . . . ”

And He came to Galilee and called the two first Disciples

“ And *straightway* they left their nets.”

And He saw two others “ and *straightway* he called them.”

“ And they go into Capernaum ; and *straightway* on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue . . . ”

“ And *straightway* there was in the synagogue a man . . . ”

And Jesus healed the man “ and *straightway* the report of him went out everywhere.”

“ And *straightway*, when they were come out of the synagogue they came into the house of Simon and Andrew.”

And Simon's wife's mother lay there, “ and *straightway* they tell him of her.”

That is all in thirty verses. You have launched out in such a breathless manner, with nine “ straightways.”

Those “ ands ” and those “ straightways ” tell you at once, you have someone here with such a story to tell that

he will leave the style, if he has ever heard of style, to take care of itself.

St. Augustine of Hippo, Lecturer on Rhetoric, tells how "I determined to read the sacred Scriptures and find out what they were like. And behold I found a thing . . . lowly in mien. I was not such that I could enter into it, or bow my head at its approach.

"They seemed to me to be far inferior to the dignity of Tully . . . In truth it is the nature of that Book to grow with the growth of the babe."

And this is truest of all of St. Mark's "Scriptures."

St. Augustine, Professor of Rhetoric, was offended at the lowliness of the mien of these stories.

And there can be no doubt that the writers of the two Gospels which copy St. Mark felt that improvements could be made.

And yet to us who are in search of the Original Story, what seemed to them a rather poor manner, will have a singular attraction.

Any reader of the English, I say, will become aware of a certain child-like way in which the thoughts are thought, and the sentences come following out one after another, and the scenes linger before you in present tenses, and if you want to say again what you have said before, you never think of shortening it into "the aforesaid." In a thousand ways you become conscious of a characteristic tone and manner, almost like an accent in a voice. You haven't noticed it much but it is always there, whether you are conscious or half-conscious of it.

And then an Aramaic scholar says that the style and the construction of the sentences, altogether, suggest that the mind that thought all this was an Aramaic mind.

It is suggested to me that I ought here to remark that Aramaic, and not Hebrew or Greek, was the popular

language of Galilee in the time of our Lord. This language spread wide under the influence of the Assyrians before 700 B.C., and shrank small again under the Arabs after 700 A.D.

Hezekiah's officials ask Rabshakeh (in Isaiah xxxvi, 11) to speak Aramaic, as being known to themselves and not known to the people of Jerusalem. Rabshakeh had been speaking Hebrew and the officials were unwilling that the menaces of Sennacherib should be overheard and understood by "the people that are on the wall." But when Jesus came into the Synagogues, it had become customary for the reader of the Old Testament Hebrew to add an Aramaic version which the people who were no scholars would understand. It was by speaking Aramaic that St. Paul won a hearing from the Jerusalem multitude who were enraged by the rumour of foreigners having got into their holy precincts.

Wherever you come upon the Scholars talking of Aramaic, you find them suggesting a language of great simplicity, with many short sentences linked together; with nouns and pronouns often repeated; a language of people who talk much as little children talk.

It has qualities (says Theodor Nöldeke, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) which make it "suitable for a clear and limpid prose," but "in its attempts to express everything clearly . . . it often becomes prolix." It is a language of prose as compared with Hebrew, and yet, in what still lives of it, "popular songs have been discovered which, though very simple, are fresh and full of feeling."

You and I (I'm thinking) cannot say, "That is exactly the opinion to which I was coming." We do not know Aramaic. But we have felt exactly the kind of differences between St. Mark and the copies of St. Mark in St. Matthew and St. Luke, which are explained by some such explanation as that. That explanation, that St. Mark was thinking

in a more elementary language, explains all sorts of peculiarities of which I was, clearly or dimly, conscious. To have such an explanation clears my mind. "So that is what I was aware of, though I had no name to give to it!" If I may take that as the explanation, I can go on now with a new intelligence as to what it is that I am looking at. Having a name for the feeling of which I was aware, makes the feeling more distinct, more articulate.

And it is something like that, that the scholars do say of St. Mark. His original is the more Aramaic. St. Matthew and St. Luke where they copy him give a more Greek form to the language.

That is not the most important distinction of St. Mark's story. But it is closely related to what matters most. This greater simplicity of his manner of thinking out his story into words, goes along with his having a more original story to tell, than they have told.

They have many alterations. Yet I suppose it is true to say that they never make one change or add one touch to St. Mark's account which makes their picture seem more vivid, or more original, than his.

Language and meaning go together as body and spirit, so that I cannot attend to either alone. But read at Mark iv, 35. Matthew viii, 18. Luke viii, 22.

It is the story of the Storm on what St. Mark calls "the sea," and St. Luke calls "the lake." That is a suggestive change: the sea dwindled to a lake.

"And on that day, when even was come, he saith unto them" . . . you will notice St. Mark has "saith" where St. Matthew has "he gave commandment," and St. Luke has "he said." It is our simpler and, often, our more picturesque talkers who say, "he says to her, he says . . ." and "then she says to him, says she . . ."

"He saith unto them, Let us go over unto the other side.

“ And leaving the multitude, they take him with them, even as he was, in the boat.

“ And other boats were with him.”

St. Matthew has : “ Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

“ And when he was entered into a boat, his disciples followed him.”

It is no insignificant difference which St. Matthew has made from St. Mark.

In St. Mark it is all so vivid that you might be in the boat. (You notice in St. Mark it is “ the ” boat and in St. Matthew it is only “ a ” boat). And you have been in it a long time. You have been watching the Teacher grow tired as He spoke, the voice carrying over the water to the wide half-circle of people on the curving shore. St. Matthew says they all “ stood ” on the beach. St. Mark “ all *were* by the sea on the land.” I daresay “ were ” is truer than “ stood.” It is homelier, but likelier.

“ And leaving the multitude ” (St. Mark says)—that is how we saw it—“ they take him with them even as he was.” He is tired. They are less tired. “ In *the* boat,” not “ in *a* boat.” It is Simon Peter’s boat. “ And other boats were with him.” That helps the picture of the audience, but not the story, of what happened. St. Matthew and St. Luke leave out the other boats.

In St. Mark, you see Jesus, the tired passenger of whom “ they ” took charge, or “ take charge ” St. Mark would have said. In St. Matthew what you see is different. In St. Matthew “ he entered into a boat and his disciples followed him.” That is not a fisherman’s picture of going on board. That is the order of a ceremonial respect for the Lord. He must enter first. Just as St. Matthew’s crowd must stand all the time : Eastern Christians stand now

whenever the Gospel is being read. And St. Luke also makes them enter into a boat.

But in St. Mark's story they did not enter into the boat : for the sufficient reason that they are in the boat already. And a storm arises and the boat is "now" in danger. And he himself was "in the stern"—St. Mark, and St. Mark alone says so—"asleep on the" [again "the"] "cushion." That is not there in the others.

What is this cushion then ? It is the steersman's cushion : I suppose, St. Peter's or St. Andrew's seat. And the steersman has given it up, so willingly, to be under the Lord's head. I would not have parted with that cushion for a Library of more Classical Greek !

"And they awake him and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish ? "

In St. Matthew : "Save, Lord ; we perish."

In St. Luke : "Master, master, we perish."

That is a change of tone a little like the change of the manner from the homelier to the more reverential embarking. One asks, which is the more likely ? That St. Mark's story happened indeed : that the disciples were in such a panic as to forget themselves and say those ungracious words : or that, the story being there already, as St. Matthew tells it, or St. Luke, someone should add those daring touches of familiarity and of frightened unkindness : that someone should add those touches, later, in a story about a Master and his First Disciples for whom each year Christian men would be making more unearthly haloes. *Saint Peter ! Saint Andrew ! Saint John !*

All this is about some seven verses. But it is only an example of what will be found, more or less, wherever any reader will compare the parallel passages of the three gospels.

We shall have to attend to it again. Meanwhile let this

serve as a hint of the kind of difference which is felt, again and again, on such a comparison.

St. Mark sounds like the more original story. Others, with other things besides to tell, may have to shorten the story-telling. This story takes its own time. It does not waste words, but it uses as many as ever it likes. This story might be compressed into the shorter stories. But they could never have unfolded so smoothly and naturally as to become this story.

This story might have been blunted down into the less vivid stories. But they could never have been given the sharpness, the distinction, which those chance words—so natural to use and then so natural to leave out—have given to St. Mark's narrative.

And above all, in that last scene, this story might have been solemnised into the less homely, the more reverential stories; but you cannot imagine any later writer making the Son of God more tired than he found Him in the story he was copying, or making the "Save, Lord; we perish" of the Holy Apostles into "carest thou not that we perish?" of the frightened men in the boat that was shipping heavy seas.

The argument from the number of "straightways" and "ands" and "he saiths" goes on alongside with the argument from the simplicity and directness, the child-likeness of the Gospel writer.

You will notice one example of this naturalness in the absence of any effort to make Jesus, or His disciples, imposing, or dignified. It seems that it had never occurred to St. Mark that there could be any need of his doing anything of the kind. As his style moves with perfect simplicity, so his Lord is spoken of quite simply. The dignity of Jesus can be trusted to take care of itself. No need of "the dignity of Tully." If we can say plainly what He was like at all, that will do.

I'll call this a sign of Originality, for in one sense or another, it is that.

There is something simple, original, great, in this confidence in the greatness of what he has to tell. It needs no guarding against disrespect: no posing and robing in conventional attitudes or costumes.

Think of the homeliness of the examples Jesus uses in His teaching. There is the sewing of a patch on an old coat; the bursting of an old wine-skin; the candle that must be put in a candle-stick; the generous or grudging weighing-out in a shop; young corn growing taller; the little mustard seed that comes to have great branches like the great tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. He takes a penny to illustrate the most vexing problem of the Jews in their national life. Those words about the penny illustrate what is meant by "the simplicity of greatness."

Homely! He is not afraid, in one place, to teach the truth about clean holiness with words which nowadays we should think it bad manners to repeat.

And look at St. Mark's words in the Transfiguration story

The glistening exceeding whiteness which was seen there was, St. Matthew says, "white as the light." St. Mark says, "white so as no fuller on earth can whiten them." I suppose the nearest you could, nowadays, get to the impression the words would then have made, would be to think of someone saying, White! whiter than the cleverest washer-woman in the world could wash them!

I do not know where you will find homeliness at all like that; a homeliness so "lowly in mien" in scenes where "I must bow my head at its approach," unless you go to William Shakespeare. It seems to be so unselfconscious. And then when you look at it, it sounds like a challenge to all men: you shall not despise anything that's natural

and homely and simple and true in human life. Look at two examples of what I mean, in *Othello*, and in *King Lear*.

When Iago has managed to make Othello jealous of Cassio, he manages to make our dear Desdemona plead with Othello to restore Cassio to favour.

ACT III, SCENE IV.—Desdemona and Othello are talking of this ; and Othello says he has a cold—a bad cold in his head. “Lend me ” (he says to Desdemona), “Lend me thy handkerchief.” “Here, my lord,” and Desdemona lends it. It’s not the right handkerchief. Othello sends her for another. She won’t go, she goes on talking about Cassio.

Othello says, “fetch me the handkerchief,” and presently he says again, “the handkerchief,” and presently again, “the handkerchief,” and then again, “the handkerchief.”

And yet people say that Shakespeare is a great writer, and that *Othello* is almost too great a tragedy to read : so fine (they’ll say) I can’t bear to read it.

I wonder he had such a lapse as that—putting in about a husband wanting to blow his nose and borrowing his wife’s handkerchief and getting quite peevish about it, too !

Or *King Lear* is considered, I’m told, a very fine play : and a tragedy ought to be noblest at the end, surely. Our beautiful dear Cordelia is dead. Shakespeare has only twenty lines left to make a great impression before the curtain falls. There’s Lear, with Cordelia dead in his arms. Let us listen to what fine language we’ll have :

no, no, no life !
 Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life,
 And thou no breath at all ? Thou’lt come no more,
 Never, never, never, never, never !
 Pray you, undo this button : thank you, Sir.
 Do you see this ? Look on her—look—her lips—
 Look there, look there !

Dies.

That's all. What a chance lost! Shakespeare must have been feeling tired when he got to the end, and just finished off anyhow.

"Pray you, undo this button"—the old man's choking and wants his shirt opened. "Thank you, sir." Someone has unbuttoned it for him.

Lear's shirt, Desdemona's handkerchief—to give them such a prominence as this is surely rather undignified! They should have been at the back, on some unnoticed clothes' line. Well! it has as little of the "dignity of Tully" as that whiteness of the peasant's coat, whiter than any fuller on earth could whiten it.

What kind of author will you seek for this simple story that is so great? I have a clue. There is a sheet I'd like to pin on that same clothes' line.

There is a suggestion that the author can be found in his own story, a suggestion which fascinates some of us. It is a very fleeting glimpse. It is one of the few special touches peculiar to St. Mark in the closing scenes of the Gospel. They were in the Garden of Olives: Jesus and the Disciples: and the enemies had come to take Jesus. And the disciples all left him and fled.

And at that moment there was "a certain young man" who wanted (it seems) to follow Jesus when he was being led away, "having a linen cloth cast about him over his naked body, and they lay hold on him; but he left the linen cloth and fled naked." We are puzzled. Why is that thought to be worth putting in? How does it help the story? What is this nameless lad to us, and what, at such a moment, do we care about his sheet?

It is the kind of incident which makes the reader feel that it is there just because it so happens that it happened so.

But who would care that it happened so?

St. Matthew doesn't. St. Luke doesn't. St. Mark does.

The suggestion is made : it would have interested St. Mark very much indeed, if it happened to be the case—that St. Mark was the lad himself.

Is there any likelihood that it was he ?

✓ St. Mark was the son of the Innkeeper in whose Upper Room the Last Supper was held : where, also, the disciples were at Pentecost : and, again, where St. Peter escaped to from prison. The house-maid's name there was " Rose." Foreign critics have sneered at our Christian Historians who have remembered the house-maid's name. Well ! we know. Her name was Rose. And she was a girl who hadn't the sense to open the door when Peter knocked. And John Mark and his father and mother lived there.

And his father, it seems, had arranged secret signs with the Lord during the last Passover. A man was sent out to wait about, ready to be the guide to the Lord's disciples. Jesus and the landlord knew : no one else : Judas must not know ! The man would carry a waterpot. Men do not do that, in the East. They leave it to the women : to Rose, perhaps. When the Lord and the Disciples came, Mark would be likely to see them. If they were late he would, I dare say, go to bed, and hear their voices in the Upper Room. He would hear them sing their hymn and hear them go away down the stairs. And presently there came to the Inn a company of men with lanterns and swords. That would wake a boy who was asleep. He would see lights of the lanterns : lights flashing on the swords in the dark. He was wide awake in an instant. Voices of disappointment ; of abuse of the guide ; of the guide excusing himself. Suddenly he knew what it meant. And, at that,—no time to dress—he snatched up the sheet from the bed : he slipped away : through a window, perhaps ? Out, and down the hill, down the narrow streets with the broad shallow steps shut in between the high walls,—moonlit,

with sharp slanting shadows,—out into the open, on, down across the brook, and into the garden !

“ Quick ! ” he pants his breathless warning, “ Quick, escape ! There’s only just time. There are ever so many of them. And they’ve got swords. I saw them in the yard by the lamp-light. And one of your party is with them. the one whose face I didn’t like. They were growling because he’d misled them and he said he knew where you would be. He told them you would be here. So I ran on ahead.”

That would account for a young man being with Jesus in the garden having a linen cloth cast about his naked body. And it might account for St. Mark’s being interested in this fact. All this may seem a very trivial suggestion, but it would fall in well enough with the steady feeling which grows on a reader of St. Mark’s Gospel. He must have known the first disciples. As a boy, he might have been there himself.

It is our earliest suggestion about the origin of the Gospel of St. Mark that it was written by John Mark, who was St. Peter’s interpreter at Rome. The tradition is so important that it is worth stopping at.

Eusebius has kept it for us : the scholar Eusebius, a friend and courtier-bishop of the first Christian Roman Emperor, Constantine (about 300 A.D.).

Eusebius quotes a writer called Papias, and Papias quotes a certain Presbyter John with whom he can remember talking.

Constantine’s friend, Eusebius, does not think a great deal of Papias. He calls Papias *σφόδρα μικρὸς τὸν νοῦν* : which means that Papias was not (let us translate it) a man of brilliant intelligence. But that refers to Bishop Papias’ views about something else. Anyhow, clever or the reverse, Papias had met and talked to “ Elders ” or

“Presbyters.” Of these Presbyters, some, it is clear, were Apostles. For Papias says, If anyone came who had been a disciple of the Elders (or Presbyters,) I questioned him in regard to the words of the Elders—what Andrew or Peter said, or what was said by Philip or by Thomas, or by James or by John, or by Matthew, or by any other of the disciples of the Lord, and what things Aristion and the presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord, say.

So Papias “questioned.”—“For I did not think that what was to be got from the books would profit me as much as what came from the living and abiding voice”: and, among others, Papias questioned Presbyter John.

And “this also the presbyter said. Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately, though not indeed in order, whatsoever Peter remembered of the things said or done by Christ.

“For he (Mark himself) neither heard the Lord nor followed him—[that one night wouldn’t count]—but afterwards, as I said, he followed Peter who adapted his teaching to the needs of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a connected account of the Lord’s discourses, so that Mark committed no error while he thus wrote some things as he remembered them. For he was careful of one thing—not to omit any of the things which he had heard and not to state any of them falsely.” [It is not felt nowadays that St. Mark’s order needs so much apology.]

Now that we are engaged on Eusebius’ quotation of Papias, it will be well to finish it for future use.

These things (Eusebius says) are related by Papias concerning Mark.

But concerning Matthew he writes as follows: “So then Matthew wrote the Logia [or “Oracles”] in the Hebrew [that is, the Aramaic] language, and everyone interpreted them as he was able.”

It will be necessary to come back to that later. Meanwhile, as to St. Mark, we have this most suggestive account given by Papias who had talked to men who had known Peter and Andrew and Philip and Thomas and the rest.

And on the other side you have this, our present Second Gospel, a story whose whole style, we are saying, seems to give evidence of a mind that could not have been counterfeited, even if it could have occurred to anyone to try to counterfeit it : whose whole manner seems to bear unconscious testimony to its being a simple, faithful, original account.

Let us bring the two together and take St. Mark's Gospel as the first portrait, so to speak, which is to help men to-day to form some conception of what Jesus of Nazareth was when He was in Galilee and at Jerusalem.

ORIGINALITY OF ST. MARK

With Thee is the well of life :
And in Thy light shall we see light.

AS a reader reads in St. Mark, he feels, more and more, It has not the dignity of Tully, but the dignity of a little child, the dignity of all simple human nature.

Constantly, in St. Mark, you feel, how entirely that dignity is left to look after itself ! It can do that. It is quite safe.

It is then one of the wisest things a man can do to-day, to look at St. Mark for a picture of what Man is : of what Human Nature means. To see what Jesus was is to see that.

We ourselves know how difficult it is for men to be simple, as they come near the truest, that is, the greatest men. All kinds of false honouring interferes with it. Excitement makes admirers see falsely. They cannot be quiet, simple, natural, true, thankful.

And, again, they have their own ideas of what a great man must be. If some great man is not that, for them he is not great. There is a simplicity in greatness which puzzles and disappoints men : not because it is not great, but because men do not know that greatness is a very simple thing.

So when Jesus came to Nazareth (vi, 1) they said, " Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon ? And are not his sisters

here with us? And they were offended in him." They knew James and Joses, and his sisters. That is a difficulty we have not known. But that kind of experience will meet us if we read St. Mark. We shall hear of Jesus in very simple, homely ways. And I submit that if we can read simply, we shall see the greatness. If we read conventionally we shall be offended.

I would we could read, as though it came to us from some such lad as he whom we last thought of, running home to the Inn door. "Why! John, where *have* you been? What *have* you done with . . . ? There, there, Boy (says the Mother) come in, come in, and don't begin crying like that!"

We are to think of that boy become a man and the younger friend of Simon Peter; of Simon Peter, a most true man, who tried to tell his story truly. And Mark heard him many times; and later, the innkeeper's son wrote down what the fisherman had been accustomed to say. Let a man read it as he would read a book that came to him so; always keeping his mind open to see greatness if it is there; as St. Peter, we think, saw the greatness of Jesus who had taught all day from his boat; saw it none the less because Jesus was tired out; and would not have seen it the more, if it had all happened in the St. Matthew way, and He had commanded, and they had followed Him, into the boat; if His Dignity had not been trusted to be so simple, had needed ceremony. There are very many touches which suggest that you are close to the first and simplest witnesses, such as St. Peter would have been.

It is not only that you hear of St. Peter's own inner mind; what St. Peter "wist" and what St. Peter "thought." (ix) St. Peter suddenly aware of the Light in the Mountain,—and Peter answereth and saith . . . about making three huts . . . for he wist not what to

answer . . . And, afterwards, they kept His saying, questioning among themselves what the rising again from the dead should mean. And (xiv) He found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy; and they wist not what to answer Him. And further on: where Matthew and Luke say "he went out and wept," St. Mark says, "and when he thought thereon, he wept." But it is not merely such claims to intimacy as those. It is the remembering of so many minute touches, in so short a book, that makes a feeling of it as a first-hand story, original, vivid, fresh. You seem to see the boat on the water; to feel its keel ground on the pebbles of the shore. That boat comes in so many times. Here are the references: iii, 9; iv, 1 and 36; v, 2, 18 and 21; vi, 32, 47, 51, 57; viii, 10, 13, 14. I turn to chapter vi, and compare St. Mark and St. Matthew. In verse 32, "*the* boat" has become "*a* boat." In 47 and 48, it remains in both "*the* boat." In 54, St. Matthew has tired of the boat and left it out. Do not despise minute indications. The question to ask is not whether they are minute, but whether they are there.

In St. Mark (iii) that boat is used because of the crowd who were thronging Jesus. The others copy the passage, but leave this out. And again (iv) he sits in the boat speaking to the people on the shore. And on that day, when even was come (St. Mark says) "they take him with them even as he was in the boat. And other boats were with them."

We were noticing that passage. The stern, the steersman's cushion, St. Peter's ungracious cry, perhaps. Such touches bring you very near.

Look at one scene, keeping attention for that kind of detail. The Feeding of the Five Thousand (vi). Is there any suggestion there of first-handedness of the evidence?

And the Apostles (who had been away on their Mission),

gather themselves together unto Jesus and they told him all things.

That "told Jesus" has slipped in St. Matthew and got into a story of John Baptist's death (Matthew xiv, 12).

"They told him all things whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught." The others are much less interested in that coming back and in the telling what they had taught. And the others leave out:—

"And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile. For there were many coming and going and they had no leisure so much as to eat."

Generally, you might say, in Matthew and Luke, you are told that there was a multitude. In St. Mark you have the perpetual sense of crowdedness: the multitude is there: or you are trying to escape from the multitude: if it isn't there, you are so often thinking of it, glad it isn't there.

Here (in St. Mark) you see that they have seen us: you see them running: too fast for us: we wanted to escape and they are there waiting for us at the landing.

That is another observation to be made. Notice the efforts to escape from the multitude, and the failures to escape. Things do not happen in the story according to the intentions of Jesus.

You remember how during the war, certain Foreign Military Reports used to save the dignity of troops which had been forced to retire, by saying that they had been withdrawn "according to plan." The suggestion was of a High Command which could control all circumstances. It was all "according to plan."

St. Mark is very far from saving the dignity of Jesus by any suggestion of the kind. This is especially the case as to that "many coming and going and they had no leisure so much as to eat," and the like. You watch Jesus trying

to avoid publicity, trying to prevent the "publishing abroad" which brought the crowds together, trying to conceal Himself from the multitude. That is His plan. But things don't happen "according to plan." It is one of those characteristics of this Life of which you feel sure, that men making up a conventional story of a Divine Hero would have avoided this thwarting of His plans. He tells men to do one thing. They go straight to do the opposite. He arranges His day to be spent one way. And then He has to do something quite different.

"And when the day was now far spent his disciples came unto him and said, The place is desert and the day is now far spent: send them away" . . .

And St. Mark writes: "They say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread and give them to eat?"

The others leave that out.

"And he saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? Go and see."

St. Matthew and St. Luke have not copied that.

And you can guess why not. Is it not divine to know all things? Can you think of the Son of God saying, "How many? Go and see." And either St. Mark had not thought of that, or else he deliberately wrote it down. This Jesus said. Therefore it is divine to say it.

It runs quite simply on in St. Mark. "And he saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? Go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. And he commanded them that all should sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, and by fifties."

It is when you compare the other two that you cannot help noticing the freshness, the vividness of St. Mark's picture. In St. Luke's: "He said unto his disciples, Make

them sit down in companies about fifty each. And they did so." The grass is forgotten.

St. Matthew: "And he commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass."

There is grass. But it isn't green. Or perhaps all grass is green. No need to remark that this grass was green. But Simon Peter has seen those hills all his life, all the year round; seen them on calm days often, doubled, hills and reflections in the waters of the "sea." Sometimes burned sere and yellow, sometimes, as now, green. He noticed. He remembered.

There they sat "in ranks": you must stop at those "ranks," too. They sat *πρασιαὶ πρασιαὶ*: that is, "flower-beds, flower-beds." It wasn't the grass alone that made a vivid colour in the scene. The bright clothes were like flowers. St. Peter noticed and remembered.

And then the big baskets, *κόφιντοι*, that were used in the gathering afterwards: such a basket as was used once by St. Paul, escaping from a Damascus window. In the later story of the Four Thousand, they were smaller baskets, and the difference is remembered.

I think a reader wants to interrupt: But how can green grass and flower-bed companies and great baskets weigh for anything in a story which makes so astounding a statement as that five loaves and two fishes were enough to feed five thousand men?

Well! The statement is very firmly embedded in the Gospel-story of St. Mark. It will be no light matter to dislodge it. The two occasions, too, are set in the writer's mind. Not only are they both written out there, but a third passage alludes to the two occasions, clearly marking them as different occasions (viii, 19, 20).

The great baskets of the first occasion have their name again: and the ordinary baskets theirs again.

St. Mark is committed to the statement. And yet St. Mark gives you a feeling of transparent sincerity. It is a dilemma at which the mind stands hesitating.

Let us consider it.

You may read in Brother Leo's *Life of St. Francis*, written two years after St. Francis died, how St. Francis was thought by the men of Assisi to be dying and how they sent soldiers to bring St. Francis to Assisi to die there for fear "his most holy body" should come to belong to another town.

And on the way towards Assisi, the company put up for the night at a certain town where the Blessed Francis was willingly taken in by a poor man, and the soldiers went out into the town trying to buy what they needed.

They came back to the Blessed Francis saying, with a laugh, Brother, you'll have to give us some of your alms for we can't get anything to eat here. And he said to them, It is because you trusted in your money and not in God. Go back to the houses where you got nothing and don't be ashamed to ask alms there for the love of the Lord God, and they will be inspired by the Holy Ghost to give you plenty.

And so they went again and asked as he told them, and this time, those of whom they asked, gave "with much gladness and abundance." And the soldiers knew that this was a miracle which happened to them, and came back to the Blessed Francis with great joy, praising the Lord.

Now it seems to me the simple attitude of mind towards St. Mark's story is to think that what St. Mark is telling has some such origin as this. I suppose that a simple faith could say that, without feeling that it was doing anything very daring.

There is support for such a view in the story itself. There are suggestions of our Lord's greatly disliking all this inquisitiveness, and desire for Him to do a miracle of the more accepted kind.

The words before the conversation of Jesus with the Disciples about the feeding of those two multitudes are these :

“ And he sighed deeply in his spirit and saith, Why doth this generation seek a sign? Verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.”

And in this conversation itself, the suspicion is that the disciples “ had not in the boat with them more than one loaf ” because they desired a sign. They wanted to make a miracle necessary.

Why should the enemies of Jesus want a sign if they had just had two indubitable signs? Why should His friends want a one-loaf miracle, if they had had a five-loaf miracle, and a seven-loaf miracle such as they have come to be in the story?

And the conversation ends, “ And he said unto them, Do ye not yet understand? ”

What was it they ought to understand by now? Was it that Jesus was such a Messiah as could easily multiply loaves—could even “ command the stones ” in the wilderness to become loaves?

Or, was it that Jesus was such a Messiah as neither the Jews, nor His own friends had dreamed of? Was He a simpler and greater and more human Messiah, whose influence could prevail on the minds of a multitude, rather than on loaves of bread: one who could work a miracle more like that of the Assisi soldiers? Did this example, perhaps, of giving all up to the others in the wilderness “ for the Love of the Lord God ” cause those others to share, all together, what they were purposing to hoard each for themselves alone?

“ They will be inspired,” said St. Francis, “ by the Holy Ghost to give you plenty.”

Which kind of Messiah does England need most to-day?

St. Mark is committed to a statement that what took place was wonderful because it was contrary to nature. And much of his story is so vivid as to make you feel you are near a first-hand evidence. That is the dilemma.

But I would observe that this is a real dilemma.

It has, as they say, two horns to impale.

It is not that there is one peril only: the peril of being unimpressed by an amazing event which really happened. If the danger were only that, we could leave the question, more easily than we feel it is right to leave it, unanswered.

There is always the other peril: the fear of losing a true wonder by insisting on a mistaken one. We cannot but injure the true wonder of Jesus, if we have raised this question and answer it untruly. It can no longer be harmless to us to believe some miracle told of Him in a mistaken story, as, for example, the story told of His birds of clay. You know the story told in an Apocryphal Gospel?

The little boys and girls were making clay birds by the stream at Nazareth. That is a very old story. And Jesus was making clay birds with them, a child among the other children. And when the clay felt the touch of His hand, the bird He was making became alive. It had real feathers in real wings and flew up and perched in the tree above the group of children and sang. A robin? A goldfinch? —I don't know—sang in praise of its Child-Creator.

Nobody believes that now. It is in an Apocryphal Gospel. It is very natural that someone should have made up the story. And for my part I think it very natural that people should like the pretty story; that it should come to be believed; that, in saying how wonderful He was, people should use that story to help them.

But, notice this. You cannot let in a false miracle without damaging the true wonder. See what you have done, O Apocryphal Gospeller. You have given me the

wonder of a fairy-tale and taken away the wonder that is worth far more. You have given me a wonder-working little boy who could have whatever he wanted : a better toy than all the others : and, in giving me that, you have taken away the great wonder of all to me, if I am a Christian thinking that Christ is what the Christian thinks He is. For it is, beyond all comparison, more worth to me that I should believe in a little Jesus of Nazareth, who had to bear with going without a toy he wanted ; who perhaps had his toy broken by a clumsy playmate, or snatched by a greedy playmate, and yet bore Himself, we may suppose, with a temper and spirit which He thought of and invented for men, and which we nowadays should call Christ-like—the wonder of His being Christ-like all the while He was really human, a real child, a real boy, a real man. That is the wonder that your little clay bird has pecked at and broken : has picked up and flown away with. We cannot admit your little clay bird that came alive. The cost is too great.

And St. Mark leaves us hesitating. Not an infallible witness : and yet so vivid a witness. We shall have to return to the question of miracle, but meanwhile I would ask any sceptical reader to allow that the evidence of St. Mark feels like honest evidence. He feels to you like an honest witness trying to tell his story truthfully. He is writing the story, forty years (say) after what he tells had happened, or hadn't happened, in the way he says it happened. Forty years will allow time for a very honest man to make a big mistake. And a big mistake does not deprive all the evidence of its value. I beg that we may go on with St. Peter and St. Mark as honest men. I for one continue to believe them honest.

It is about the originality, the freshness of St. Mark's account that we are thinking : the vividness which comes

of a complete absence of the fear of homeliness, of a simple wish to tell the story as he believes it happened, leaving the dignity of it to make itself simply and naturally felt. We have already noticed that in such a scene as the Transfiguration.

You find it again in miracles.

In that homely healing of the deaf man (vii, 33) and again of the blind man (viii, 24). He is, as it were, on their level. He is their friend who takes them away to be alone with Him. What a carelessness of dignity in both those scenes! "He spat." "When he had spit."

And the children.

The child He used for the lesson to the Twelve. He is on Jesus' knee, I think.

"Taking him in His arms" as St. Mark alone notices.

And again the children of the lesson in our Baptism Service (x, 13). "Beloved, ye hear in this Gospel" (as you do not hear in St. Matthew or St. Luke) "how He blamed those that would have kept them from Him" . . . "Ye perceive" (here, only) "how by His outward gesture and deed He declared his good will toward them; for He embraced them in his arms, He laid his hands upon them, and blessed them."

He thought them worth being indignant about.

He was much displeased with the disciples when they had rebuked those who "brought unto him little children."

And again, with what feeling He defends the woman against the men, when the woman had anointed His Head with her costly ointment. "Let her alone. Why trouble ye her?" She understands. You don't.

His manner must have been so natural that men were at their ease with him from the first.

After that first evening at Capernaum, the disciples go to look for Him and are advising Him, remonstrating with

Him, almost. "Simon and they that were with him followed after Him; and they found Him and say unto Him, All are seeking thee."

And when the crowds collect "and his friends heard it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself."

And, perhaps on the same occasion (ten verses further on) the mother and the brethren standing outside, sent a message, "calling Him." You see. Calling *Him*! So natural have been His relations with them.

And if in this "calling Him" they have taken a liberty, their rebuke is not that they are told that they have been too familiar. They are dispossessed of any singular claim to familiarity in quite another way.

"And looking round on them which sat round about him, he saith, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother."

St. Mark noticed this humanity of Jesus in his own way.

In his Gospel only it is remembered that when the young man who was very rich came to Him, Jesus looking upon him, loved him.

And there is a contrast which is striking between the two accounts of the questioner coming to ask "which is the great commandment?"

St. Mark says that when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

And this was said at a time of intense hostility of the school to which this Scribe belonged against Jesus.

The scene in St. Luke x, 25, looks like another account of the same questioner. It is an independent version. The language of the two versions is sufficiently different. Apart from the quotations from Deuteronomy and Leviticus

—words which were used daily by all pious Jews—there is scarcely a word the same in the two accounts. “And” . . . “he” . . . “him” . . . “and he said unto him” . . . “Thou” . . . But all the other words are different.

But the divergence for the sake of which I stop to compare the two accounts lies in the feeling towards the Scribe.

The Scribe in St. Mark is “loved.” The Lawyer in St. Luke appears rather as an enemy hoping to draw Jesus into some statement which could be used against Him later. The feeling of the two versions is as different as the language. Jesus is so human there in St. Mark’s account. Indeed, there is a kind of supreme Human Nature in Jesus. It is felt, conferring on Him a natural authority over other men. He speaks with a natural authority as the Son of Man. A man is brought to Him who does not appear to have been a young man. “Son,” Jesus says to him. A woman who had been twelve years an invalid came and touched His garment—a middle-aged woman, it is likely. Jesus said, “Daughter.”

Those twelve young men were amazed at something He had said. “Children,” He said, “how hard it is for them that trust in riches . . .” The commandingness is there. It is very simple and quiet. Perhaps it is the authority that comes of being a true Man.

He takes all true people for His brothers.

And, as you saw, on the reverse side, such human feeling implies a deep anger against inhuman moods. It will defend the little children among the grown-up people: the woman among the men. It can be very stern among friends. But most of all it will know, at once, its enemy, in men who have cultivated an insincere and artificial relation towards human things.

It has been said that Jesus begins gently with the Scribes. And I suppose it is true that He makes a human appeal

to the Scribes, as when he sent the leper, healed, to the Priests. That was a human appeal. But as the inhumanity declares itself, the humanity knows it for its opposite. You find the story of that (five cases given) in Chapter ii. How human He is, arguing with them, when that paralytic "son" lies before them! Perfect humanity wants to see the poor fellow well and strong again, even if he has sinned. Perfect humanity forgives. The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins. It is because men are inhuman that they cannot.

And the next incident is of the Publicans and Sinners in His house. Sin is a kind of disease. The perfectly human heart touches and heals it. "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

And then the Pharisees' rules of fasting are answered with those homely words about the patch of new cloth and about the new wine in the old bottles. Men must be natural. Fasting will come when it is right. The law is "be true men."

The fourth case is that desecration of the Sabbath when the disciples made little threshing-floors of their hands and threshed the corn on the day of rest.

How small, how inhuman is this trivial reproach which calls out that great human saying:

"And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: so that The Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

And the fifth case is the beginning of deliberate active hostility of the inhuman Pharisees against the humanity of the Son of Man.

He makes a human appeal, that poor withered hand, in a synagogue, on a sabbath day!

"They watched Him. . . . He said Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm?"

But they held their peace.

And when He had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart . . . He healed the hand.

And the Pharisees went out, and straightway with the Herodians took counsel against Him, how they might destroy Him."

VI

THE ST. MARK PORTRAIT

Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling
so high : and yet humbleth Himself to behold the things
that are in heaven and earth ?

WE were speaking of Jesus, the Human, among the Scribes. His humanness, as it estranged the Pharisees, drew all other men towards Him. There is, in the attractiveness felt in Him, of course, more than can be accounted for without the help of those works of healing, which are a kind of humanness in act and deed.

You cannot arrive at a historical picture of Him and of His life at all, unless you accept them, as believed in, not by St. Mark or St. Peter only, but by the multitudes, and also by the Lord Himself.

For, you are to notice, the whole story is crowded with multitudes.

i, 37. All are seeking for Thee.

i, 45. And (the leper) went out and began to publish it much and to spread abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city, but was without in desert places : and they came to him from every quarter.

ii, 1. And when he entered again into Capernaum after some days, it was noised abroad that he was in the house. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, no, not even about the door.

iii, 7. And Jesus and his disciples withdrew to the sea and a great multitude from Galilee followed : and from Judea

(and the rest) . . . a great multitude hearing what great things he did, came unto him.

And he spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him : for he healed many.

iii, 20. And he cometh into a house. And a multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. . . .

iv, 1. And again he began to teach by the seaside. And there is gathered unto him a very great multitude, so that he entered into a boat and sat in the sea ; and all the multitude were by the sea on the land. And he taught. . . .

iv, 35. And on that day when even was come, he saith unto them, Let us go over unto the other side. And leaving the multitude, they take him with them, even as he was . . .

v, 21. And when Jesus had crossed over again in the boat unto the other side (back to Capernaum) a great multitude was gathered unto him.

v, 31. Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me ?

vi, 31. Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

The avoiding of the multitude begins, on the return of the Twelve from their journey.

Yet the next scene is that multitude of the five thousand. He sends them away. But only to meet them again, as soon as His party land again (vi, 54) . . .

When they were come out of the boat, straightway the people knew him, and ran round about that whole region, and began to carry about on their beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

And wheresoever he entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country, they laid the sick in the market-places and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

At vii, 24. He is trying once more "to be hid," when the woman who was a Greek besought him for her daughter. Then He is at Sidon (or Saida) trying to be alone with the Disciples.

Then (at viii) at Cæsarea Philippi with the disciples alone. The story would fall to pieces altogether if you removed the multitudes *and* the avoiding of the multitudes: their presence *and* the anxiety to escape from them.

Now it is clear that the multitudes imply miracles of healing.

You might say, taking the crudest possible definition of miracle—defining a miracle as something which happens although there is no earthly reason why it should happen—you might say that those multitudes are just such a miracle, those multitudes in the street and on the seashore and on the hills, multitudes thronging and pursuing Him: gazing after Him as He goes away and awaiting His return. They are an effect without a cause, if you are to leave out the miracles of healing.

The healing came first. The teaching followed.

iii, 8. A great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him.

iv, 1. And there is gathered unto him a very great multitude and he taught them.

That is the order.

Can anyone suppose that the multitudes would have been there to hear the teaching in itself. "What is this?" they said (i, 27), "a new teaching!"

Let the reader observe what it was that was new.

“With authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits and they obey him.”

His teaching was not such as to collect the multitudes.

His parables were designed to select the few that had ears to hear His high demands, His heart-searching truth : to sift the multitude and select the few.

And multitudes do not crowd after moralists. Austere stern claims on the human soul are not popular. William Wordsworth was not popular, though he wrote the *Ode to Duty*. He would have been more loudly cheered if he had jumped in to save one drowning dog.

The multitudes thronged Jesus. The miracles of humane healing were the cause of their coming. When they were near Him, His humanness won their hearts. They did not want to lose Him, whether they understood Him or not. The crowd was on the side of Jesus.

Up to the last week He was their chosen, if their misunderstood Hero.

xi, 13. And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and sought how they might destroy him, for they feared him, for all the multitude was astonished at his teaching.

xii, 12. And they sought to lay hold on him ; and they feared the multitude.

xii, 37. And the common people heard him gladly.

xiv, 1. They sought how they might take him with subtilty, and kill him : for they said, Not during the feast, lest haply there should be a tumult of the people.

xv, 9. Pilate perceived that *for envy* they had delivered him up.

Men felt in the Son of Man that they had found the Man who was, by natural right, their King. He does not refuse the authority offered Him by the multitude as being too great, but rather as not being truly great.

He moves with a natural authority, as Carlyle would have said, "the King": the man that "can."

I think there is a kind of height of bearing in that test question to them, about Messiah and the Son of David; Messiah who is to be greater than any earthly royal lineage could make Him.

And they look a very poor and small sort of men in their politic answer about authority.

xi, 33. They answered Jesus and say, *We know not.* And Jesus saith unto them, *Neither tell I you.*

He felt Himself to be the natural Shepherd of the people. Twice (vi, 34, and xiv, 27) he suggests the title which, through St. Luke and St. John, makes a claim so dear to Christian hearts, and so high for Man to make among men. He is the Shepherd. Others are the sheep.

It has always been felt that, if He was a man, He was not a modest, a self-effacing man. He was too simple in His greatness to speak as though He were not great.

There is a picture of "Christian Meekness" which William Blake, for example, refuses utterly for Him :

Was Jesus humble, or did He
Give any proofs of humility . . .
He was too proud to take a bribe ;
He spoke with authority, not like a scribe . . .
He did not die with christian ease,
Asking pardon of His enemies, . . .
If He had, Caiaphas would forgive, . . .
He had only to say that God was the Devil,
And the Devil was God, like a christian civil,
Mild christian regrets to the Devil confess
For affronting him thrice in the wilderness. . . .

Those are rather wild words, but they say something that has got to be attended to.

Jesus never refuses any title as too high for Him. It is men who have ever since been in search of some Name that would be a title great and high enough for what He is.

The Jewish use of titles, Son of Man, Son of David,

Messiah, made them titles too slight for Him. Men have chosen words to name what He was, Christos or Logos, the Divine King or the Divine Word. But always He illustrates the names, not they Him. Seeing Him, we know what was dimly hinted at in the dreams which men dreamed of Majesty. He was more than Prophecy or Apocalypse could say. And this was so, because He was the one true Man who ever lived, the natural Lord of all human hearts. For men have it within them to be something immeasurably greater than anything they are. They have ideals which He fulfilled. They are human ideals, and He was the Ideal Man.

He fulfils human ideals in human circumstances. How could it be otherwise? Where else could they be realized? And St. Mark allows us to see, as St. Matthew and St. Luke, even, in copying St. Mark, did not always venture to allow us to see, how human were the conditions of His life.

For example, to be human is to belong to one People. The man born of no country, the native of Cosmopolis, would be a monster, not an ideal Man.

In Mark vii, I think you have an account of His coming as a Jew into touch with a foreigner, and there are different ways of reading the story.

It seems to me that to be truly human, a man must begin as of one race. In Nazareth one who was a real Nazareth child would live among Nazareth ideals, as well as among Nazareth accents. A human mind of a Jew would live among Jewish thoughts. And between Jewish thoughts and Jewish thoughts a true human mind would choose the truer, the more human thoughts.

The thoughts of a foreigner would be new sometimes in true and human, sometimes in untrue and inhuman ways, to a Jewish mind.

And you are allowed to watch, as Jesus comes into touch

with a foreigner, a woman who was a Greek. You are allowed to hear what He says and she answers, and what He says again. It is a conversation that has puzzled us all. Why did He say those words about letting the dogs go hungry? It was, we were told, to try the woman's faith. We must not doubt, we were told, that He knew, when He gave that Jewish answer, that He would do what she wanted in the end. It was good for her, we were to suppose, to be kept in that torture a little longer!

But, take it the other way. The woman, being a Greek, said something which was new to One who had always been among Jews.

Even Jewish dogs and Greek dogs are so different from each other.

Jewish dogs live in the street, unclean animals, that scavenge, in packs. They belong to the street, not the house. None has a name. You feed them, and all the street feeds them, with scraps thrown out for them to scramble for.

It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the Jewish dogs.

But Greek dogs are different. The oldest song we know has a Greek dog in it. He had a name. He knew his master: knew him before anyone else, when Odysseus came home after years away.

And the Greek vases have pictures of the scholar learning to intone, perhaps, that story of "Argus" from Homer, the scholar perched on a high seat: the boy very well behaved, above, and his dog very well behaved, below.

Or the little Greek girl who was buried and had her portrait on the tombstone, had a ball in her hand, a dog playing with her.

"Yea, Lord: even the dogs under the table"—they are under the Greek table, you notice—"eat of the children's

crumbs." I shouldn't wonder if the children ate, bite and bite about with the dogs at teatime, sometimes.

It is a place where you will ask, Which would be the more divine? To be made man, but a man who knew everything, everything that would ever happen, every thought that would ever be thought, for ever and ever,—to be made that kind of man—or to be made man so humanly as to belong to one village, and to one people, and to be touched by a foreign beauty when He found it in a thought put to Him in a far-off village of a foreign people. To "change His mind" because of a new thought that came to it, when His mind came into touch with the mind of one who, though a villager, stood, at that moment, for all that Hellas means?

He was of Israel—of Galilee—of Nazareth; He belonged to them. He spoke, no doubt, with the same North Country accent as betrayed Simon Peter. And St. Mark has kept even some of the words He used: "Talitha cumi," "Ephphatha," "Abba," and the cry on the Cross.

"Talitha cumi." "Little girl, get up." The whole world knows those syllables. Four hundred translations repeat them. But think what a journey they have made. Have you ever been out at sea and seen a small white butterfly blown, or flying, miles away from sight of any land? The words are like that.

And they make real to a mind the far-away Galilee from which they come.

They are the language of Galilee which He spoke. He accepts that limitation because only by being of one people and town can He be the Son of Man for all mankind. There is nothing hid but *in order that it should* be manifested, neither was anything made secret but *in order that it should* come to light.

He was human so that He asked that question : " How many loaves have ye ? Go and see."

He claims to be above all conventional untrue inhuman mankind. The Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath. And yet a Scribe could have corrected Him the moment before. " Abiathar was not high priest but the high priest's son."

We hear him hint at a Royalty beside which David's and Solomon's are pale. And in the same sentence we ask, But did David indeed ever know anything of Psalm cx ?

Jesus clearly foresaw, as no one else there foresaw, the inevitable outcome of the Jewish temper. He foretold His own Death. And, beyond His own crucifixion, He saw the siege of Jerusalem that must come. He could discern, as the Jews could not, the signs of the times. What a true man could see in the moral sky, He saw as simply as country folk read the day's weather in the sunrise.

But that is not to write the details of history beforehand. And we have still left to us words of His, unexplained, and unfulfilled, to this day.

ix, 1. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power.

xiv, 28. I will go before you into Galilee.

xiv, 25. Verily I say unto you, I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of heaven.

In Mark xiii, there is the Son of Man saying, " that is something which I do not know myself."

He does not know the details of history beforehand, I suppose. And yet He did foreknow the Truth of history.

If anyone will think again of Jesus as He seemed to be, before Christianity had accomplished any of its advance,

it is a marvel to go over in your mind the obscurity, the smallness of the beginnings, and to look at the greatness, the splendour of that which followed. When He was the Carpenter turned Preacher, followed by those few young fishermen, how unlikely it would have seemed that those were the men who would influence, as they have influenced, mankind.

And yet it is still more wonderful to me to think, not only that they have done this, but that they go out at the beginning quite simply with this as what they are setting out to do.

You hear it at the outset—Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed which becomes a Tree means this. So, in another document, the Temptation which comes to Him is a Temptation which takes for granted that He is to be supreme, and tempts Him to go the wrong way to work to become Master of all the world.

In connection with words which speak of His approaching death, He says that wheresoever the gospel shall be preached *throughout the whole world*, the woman shall be spoken of.

He claims to cleanse the Temple because it is the house of prayer *for all nations*.

He decides how far Cæsar's authority shall extend.

He claims for Himself more than He allows to Moses or to David. So the Carpenter of Nazareth speaks. And surely the wonder is twofold: not only that from that obscure beginning, He has attained so high of sovereignty over the human race: not only that He overcame the Græco-Roman world, but that He knew so simply and said so quietly that He was going to do it.

Yet there is nothing inhuman in this conviction that His Truth must triumph. The mood most like it is Isaiah's

claiming for that obscure captive Israel in Babylon, as by native right, sovereignty over all the Peoples who do not know the Truth. Such greatness is not inhuman, it is the inalienable right of the True Man.

And He is, indeed, Man.

He can be tired in body. He can be weary at heart. He can have to ask questions. His plans can be upset, like another man's, even though it is because the multitudes are convinced that no other man is like Him. And in these human circumstances and through these human limitations—"through" them and not "in spite of" them—it is revealed what He is. He is the Son of God.

There is no account of Him in which this Revelation is not clear. In St. Mark's most human account it is quite clear. In St. Mark's account there is, first, the revelation to Himself, "Thou art my Beloved Son."

And then the revelation to the three closest friends, "This is my Beloved Son, hear ye Him."

The Son of Man is, also, the Son of God.

We see that He is the Son of Man, in St. Mark, with singular distinctness. And it is not in spite of His human limitations, but through them, that He realizes, as Man, the life of the Son of God among men.

So you watch Him being really human. He was not playing a human part, but being human. He was not acting, but being Man. There is no condescension there, as of a strong man pretending to be an equal among boys at their games. There is none of the irony of a sage pretending not to know, coming down with a quiet smile to the low level of the ignorance of other people. It is all much simpler than that, for there is no patronizing in Love.

But, as Man, in a human life, He realizes something which none of the sons of men, without Him, ever realized: because He alone realized the true nature of God's human creatures.

It is not in human nature to be human and natural, so long as a man lives independently of God. The elementary truth about human nature is that it cannot be true to itself and cannot live its real life, unless it is living in dependence upon the Father which is in Heaven. Man is a travesty of himself without the Presence of God. He is a creature out of his element, if he does not pray, "Our Father" . . .

Piers Plowman has that, five hundred years ago.

The worme that woneth under erthe, and in water fisses,
The crykett by kynde of fur, and corlew by the wynde,
Bestes by gras and by greyn and by grene rotes.
In menyng that alle men myghte the same
Lyven thorgh lell by-leyve as oure lord wittneseth.

A man, that is, can only live in "loyal belief": as truly as a worm must have its earth, or fishes their water, or a cricket the fire, or a curlew the wind, or beasts the grass and the grain and the green roots, or they'll not be themselves.

Therefore you may say it either way.

Jesus alone was the Son of Man because, in Him alone, human nature lived in that element without which human nature starves and is shrunk and distorted.

And, for the same reason, Jesus alone was the Son of God. We speak of Human and we speak of Divine, and when we want to know what we mean by the great words, we must return to look at Jesus of Nazareth. If we see Him, we know. If we don't see Him, our Theology is "a tale of little meaning though the words are strong."

VII

A FAIR HEARING

And therefore as a stranger give it welcome

THERE is a difficulty, which must be faced, in presenting St. Mark's work to modern men as a book to be read afresh. I mean the element of Miracle that is found there.

If St. Mark is going to be read at all he has the right to demand that the reader shall not become supercilious the moment he is aware of this element of Miracle.

You may watch the German critics of early days postulating various kinds and degrees of folly and imposture on the part of the disciples, and of the Lord Himself, in order to account for such a story ever being told. But it is soon seen that no theory of conscious imposture will hold. The nature of the Christian Story makes impostures as incredible as any miracle could be.

The story demands, on any rational view of it, that the modern reader shall make some effort to imagine a world unlike his own ; a world in which honest men believe in the happening of miracles.

That saying that "Miracles do not happen" is found for the most part in close company with a tacit assumption that Miracle can best be defined as "that which does not happen."

"If something *couldn't* happen, it would be a miracle if it *did* happen." That doesn't sound nonsense to the

modern minds of which I'm thinking. And yet this Gospel looks like honest writing, the attempt of honest men to say truly what they believe did happen. And the Gospel says that "Miracles" did happen.

Clearly the modern reader must make an effort to get out of that stiffened frame of mind, if he is ever even to begin to give St. Mark a chance of saying anything which St. Mark may have to say worth his hearing.

You might as well hope to understand his words in the original without any effort to learn Greek, as hope to understand him without any effort to get out of the particular narrowness of mind which belongs to our time and country. We shall have to allow for limitations on two sides ; the limitations of the first century in Galilee and Jerusalem and Rome ; and the limitations of the twentieth century in England.

You will never (I think of someone saying) no ! you will never persuade the Man in the Street to believe in Miracle.

I am not sure whether that, using the words in your meaning of them, is what I want to do.

But I should greatly hope that the Man in the Street might be persuaded to allow, in judging of St. Mark's story, that many things may be true which he himself is in a measure disqualified from readily believing, just because he is the Man in the Street.

His experience, he will allow, insofar as he is the Man in the Street, absorbed in the affairs of the Street, will be likely to disqualify him from judging of another world which lies beyond the tram-wires above, and the pavement beneath and the drainage under the pavement. I once heard a man of the street, a man of a rather narrow street, who lay back on the grass among the buttercups by the river-side, and had been listening to a skylark high above us for a while ; I heard him turn to his mate and

say, "How much would you give for that? . . . cage included?"

In Bethnal Green, the skylark is the bird-in-the-cage, and the man is the man-in-the-street. The man said the words with Cockney cheeriness, and yet a little bit wistfully too.

And I am asking for that degree of imaginativeness, which can believe in other men being real men though they live in a world very different from ours, and can believe that the faculty for knowing all the truth may possibly suffer from the limitations of our age, and of our street also.

There are two errors possible, when we hear a story of wonder: when, say, the "incurable" are "cured." There is the mistaken diagnosis which misreads the case. And there is the mistaken opinion of ourselves as knowing all that can be known of healing influences.

Or, say it this way. There is a manner of going through a wood in April which makes it empty of all the birds. You may move in it, always the centre of a great circle of birdlessness. You may come out at the other end, convinced that not a bird is there.

And, in much the same way, if Gibbon comes in, miracles shrink out of all belief. We must have nothing that is incredible to Eighteenth Century science.

And yet men haven't always lived in the Eighteenth Century. They began before it. And they are going on after it. I imagine the Twentieth Century has found room in its philosophy for things in heaven and earth undreamed of in the Eighteenth Century.

There is room for the two errors. St. Mark was not infallible. Neither are we.

His doctors may have made a mistaken diagnosis. Our doctors may be unaware of the influences which can be at work in healing.

Horatio says, This is wondrous strange. And Hamlet answers, And therefore as a stranger give it welcome. The lines were spoken of a Stage Ghost ; but there *are* other Spirits.

"Ghost," we say, in English, and chuckle every time. And "Ghost" is our only English word for Spirit. That fact alone might sound an English warning.

Try a story from St. Mark, Chapter v :

There cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name ; and seeing Jesus, he falleth at his feet, and beseecheth him much, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death : I pray thee, that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be whole and live. And he went with him ; and a great multitude followed him, and they thronged him.

And a woman which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, having heard the things concerning Jesus, came in the crowd behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I touch but his garments, I shall be made whole.

And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up ; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her plague.

You will recall what follows. "Who touched me?" And the woman "came and fell down before him and told him all the truth."

And then the news follows from Jairus' house, "Thy daughter is dead" ; and Jesus' saying, when they reach the courtyard full of mourners, "The child is not dead but sleepeth" ; and then "Talitha cumi" ; and "He commanded that something should be given her to eat."

I suppose we should all find it very difficult to reconstruct

that scene as an English scene, with the old lady an inmate of one of our Almshouses, and Jairus an English Churchwarden, and his little girl a child in Standard V at an English School. I think the approach of a thought of the photographers of the Illustrated Press would dispel the vision. It would offend our common sense: that is, the sense that is common to us in our Street and in our Newspapers.

William Blake, I fancy, would have been unconscious of the difficulties. But then William Blake had "a sense" which is "uncommon" among us. I can imagine him contending that if such a scene is incredible to our common sense, it is so much the worse for our common sense.

If you are tempted to despise this story of St. Mark, I should ask you to suspend judgment: to remember that common sense has changed its mind before: and it may change it again.

Science, in so far as it is scientific, would not, I think, reject anything that St. Mark has said there.

The friend of Jairus said, Thy daughter is dead. Jesus said, The child is not dead, but sleepeth.

It is St. Luke, and not St. Mark, who sides with Jairus' friend, and says, "They knew." It is the crowd, not you or I, that are certain.

"They laughed Him to scorn."

There is too much laughing to scorn.

The writer, not a great many hours before writing this, found that he was talking to one who was told more than four years ago that, in twelve months, she must be a helpless cripple. And she is doing all her work to-day.

The diagnosis was mistaken, some will say. And others will say that the verdict did not allow for some prayers that have been prayed and some hands that have been laid on her.

Who will deny, in the name of science, the possibility of Jesus' healing that old woman, or that little girl?

Between St. Luke's statement of what had happened, and the modern "Common Sense" view of what can and what cannot happen, perhaps St. Mark is going quietly along the simple way of a true wonder.

The evidence may be stronger or less strong in any case. It will be worth what it is worth. And on the other side our faculty for determining what is credible and what is incredible will be less or more liable to error.

As you follow the story of the influence of Christ, you do not come, suddenly, on an end of this belief in "more things in heaven and earth" "than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

There are St. Mark's stories.

And the miracles go on in the Acts.

You have, for example, a story of St. Paul and St. Luke at Malta, written down, we think, by St. Luke.

There is a viper which fastened on St. Paul's hand.

And there is the father of Publius with a fever and dysentery. And "the rest also which had diseases in the island came, and were cured."

Which words of that, will anyone reject in the name of science?

"Paul entered in and prayed and laying hands on him healed him." I submit that St. Luke is a higher authority as to what happened there, than any man in my street, even if St. Luke saw more wonder than any of us would allow in the harmlessness of the viper and the unswollenness of the Apostle.

From the Acts the miracles go on. You find them in Papias of whom we were thinking. He relates, Eusebius says, "wonderful events which he claims to have received from tradition."

Eusebius has a sound in his voice which warns you against claiming him as upholding Papias' witness. But there is there an atmosphere of "wonderful events" in the Ephesus and Hierapolis of Papias' time, such as is not found under the clearer skies of London and Glasgow and Manchester to-day. A hundred years after Eusebius, you come to St. Augustine of Hippo, and of "the City of God," of which he wrote after the fall of Rome in 410 A.D.

He is of opinion that miracles are constantly happening. Do not "laugh him to scorn" but look at the twenty-second book of his *City of God*.

I can imagine modern people finding it a very delicate matter to allow for the two several possibilities of error in story after story he tells.

His first is of Innocentius. "I was there. I saw it myself." Innocentius had a dreadful time with diseases with ugly names. All the doctors came and cut him about, until they said they couldn't cut any more. They would leave it and hope for the best.

And one friend—a doctor, too—who lived in the house with him said they must cut again. It was the only hope. And Innocentius was so angry with his friend that he sent him out of the house.

In time the other doctors began to see that the friend was right. They went away in despair, and Innocentius had to make up his mind that his friend was right, and that he must be cut about again if he wanted to live.

He sent to Alexandria for a doctor. He would have an entirely new doctor this time, he said.

When the Alexandrian doctor arrived, he greatly admired the work of the Carthage doctors and refused to meddle with their case. They must be called back for one more operation.

Poor Innocentius submitted. The operation was to be

next day. He called in "holy men" overnight. St. Augustine was there. He names three others. One of them was Bishop Aurelius "who is still living and he and I have often spoken about it to one another since. In the evening they prayed. "We kneeled." Innocentius threw himself on his face praying in a passion of "tears and groans and sobs. I thought he would choke. I don't know whether the others prayed. I couldn't. I could only watch him. I said in my heart, Lord, whose prayers will You hear, if You don't hear his?" Next morning they got ready for an operation, such as operations were in 400 A.D. The knives were made ready, etc., etc. The bandages were undone. And behold! The thing with the ugly name was gone! "Then joy and praises unto God, with tears of comfort, were yielded on all sides beyond the power of my pen to describe."

Herein is the marvel: that a man such as St. Augustine was, tells this story: and that he tells it as he tells it. Might not the "holy men" and "the Doctors" be reconciled here? You said "incurable disease" and Innocentius is cured. You do not know how far your diagnosis was mistaken, neither do we.

And, all the time, there remains another unknown element. It is the cure. We cannot diagnose that; nor deny it.

St. Augustine has pages of such miracles. I pass from his first to his last.

It is the story of a brother and sister of a large family of Cæsarea in Cappadocia. Their father died. They behaved badly to their mother, and their mother cursed them all, seven brothers and three sisters. She cursed them all ten. The result of the curse was that they all trembled all over, wherever they went ever after.

Ashamed to be seen in Cæsarea, this brother and sister

came, trembling still, and arrived at Hippo a fortnight before Easter. Their names were Paul and Palladia. They spent their time praying at a shrine in Hippo where the relics of St. Stephen the first martyr had done many miracles : seventy in two years.

On Easter morning many came to the Church. And Paul came, too. He clung to the bars of the shrine and prayed, and presently he fell down flat, and lay as if asleep. But in his sleep he who had always been trembling, now lay quite still.

The people looking on debated whether to wake him, to pick him up, or to let him be and watch him. And then he got up, the trembling gone.

St. Augustine was coming into Church and heard the "loud acclamations and praises to God." People crowded about him to tell him what had happened. "I rejoiced and thanked God." "I kissed him," etc., etc.

Paul and Palladia had to stand on the Chancel steps while St. Augustine spoke to the crowd—seen of all : Paul healed ; Palladia still trembling. St. Augustine let them go, and himself still spoke, when another acclamation interrupted him. Palladia, too, had ceased to tremble as she prayed at St. Stephen's shrine.

Foreign and ancient is the story. The mother's curse ; the relics called " St. Stephen's " ; the healing. There are elements in the story which we, in our Street, should view with grave suspicion. And yet there are elements in the story which I do not think human common sense will in the end despise.

That is St. Augustine of Hippo. Three hundred years later, another St. Augustine was at Canterbury. His story is told by our own Venerable Bede.

Bede is a very trustworthy writer. He tells you where he heard or found what he writes. He feels to me a truthful

man. Yet I think he and our modern Sceptics would have greatly puzzled one another.

Bede has a letter from Pope Gregory to St. Augustine of Canterbury, very glad to hear that St. Augustine's missionary work in Kent is attended with so many miracles. St. Gregory suggests no doubts about the diagnosis. He only notices that there is a danger to a man who does so many miracles. He warns St. Augustine against pride.

I'll turn to "Bede, the Servant of Christ," he calls himself, the old monk of Jarrow and Wearmouth, for an account of what Anglo-Saxons were when he wrote, 1200 years ago, and I do so with a suspicion that our ancestors will be found to have a naturalness and open-mindedness among them, which we have lost. The promising boyhood of the Saxons may have specialized and narrowed itself into a manhood in which instincts of high worth have lost themselves. There are men who know a thousand things the boy doesn't know; and yet, and yet, the boy knows truths which they never somehow feel, now, to be true. There are beliefs of the boy which the man knows he would be the better for believing. Only he can't believe them now.

I find Bede's England, of course, a place where there are such suggestions of superstition as anyone would expect to find among people so lately become Christian. King Æthelbert, as a Pagan, was careful to arrange that his first meeting with St. Augustine should be in the open air where any magic or spells these monks had brought with them would work less well than in a house.

Or when John of Beverley is to lay his hands on a nun who has (it seems) been blood-poisoned in her "blood-letting," "being told that [the blood had been 'let'] on the fourth day of the moon, said, 'You did very indiscreetly and unskilfully to let blood on the fourth day of the moon; for I remember that Archbishop Theodore, of

blessed memory, said, that blood-letting at that time was very dangerous, when the light of the moon is waxing and the tide of the ocean is rising.' "

It was into a superstitious Saxon world that Christianity had come. Bede gives you a feeling of the Faith appearing as something very new and very beautiful. The Celtic monks brought it from Iona to Melrose: and there " wherever any clerk or monk went, he was joyfully received by all men, as God's servant; and even if they chanced to meet him on the way, they ran to him with bowed head, and were glad to be signed with the cross by his hand, or blessed by his word."

Here is a picture of St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne.

Sometimes riding but oftener on foot, he went out into the country, to wild people in the wild hills: a week, or a month, he would be away, reaching the simple people whom no one else reached. There was the same " flocking together to hear the Word " as at Melrose. The simplicity and the superstition meet in this passage. He " laboured far and wide to convert the people dwelling round about, from the life of foolish customs, to the love of heavenly joys; for many profaned the faith which they held by their wicked actions; and some also, in the time of a pestilence, neglecting the mysteries of the faith which they had received, had recourse to the false remedies of idolatry, as if they could put a stop to the plague sent from God, by incantations, amulets, or any other secrets of the Devil's arts."

Of St. Oswald's Cross it is told that " even to this day " (a hundred years after) " many are wont to cut off small splinters from the wood of the holy cross, and put them into water, which they give to sick men or cattle to drink, or they sprinkle them therewith, and these are presently restored to health."

The dust of the place where Oswald was slain by the

Heathen, had the same virtue. And the grass there grew greener and more beautiful than other grass.

A Briton noticing this supposed—"as was indeed the case"—that dust from these sacred places would cure sick people. He took some, tying it up in a linen cloth and reached a house (of wattles and thatch) where they asked him to join them at supper. The supper lasted late. They drank deep. The great fire in the middle of the room caught the roof. The house was burned down, all but one timber on which hung the linen cloth, untouched by the fire. People heard of it in the country round, and many came "and received the blessing of health for themselves and their friends."

The authority for this statement is not given. It is very convincing, however, as you read it, of one fact—that Bede believed it. And if Bede, then many Saxons besides.

With these examples as a kind of warning, turn to Bede's accounts of the miracles of John of Beverley, who was the Bishop of Hexham, who ordained Bede himself. There are four stories given to Bede by Berthun who had been with John at Beverley Monastery. Berthun is said to have been "a man worthy of all reverence and undoubted truthfulness," once deacon to John of Beverley, now Abbot of the Monastery of Beverley.

Near Hexham was a solitary dwelling with a mound about it, and scattered trees, by the river Tyne. There John of Beverley used to spend Lent, across the river, with other monks in prayer and study. And in almsgiving. So, to receive their alms, they took with them a young mute who could not say a word and also had a head "all scabbed and hairless."

The Bishop made the boy come to see him; told him to put out his tongue; took him by the chin and signed his tongue with the Holy Cross: then told him to speak.

Say "Yea." At once the boy said "Yea." Then, in many lessons, the Bishop got him to say letters, A, B, and all; then syllables; then words; then sentences. And then (like St. Peter and St. John's lame man, says Bede, walking and leaping and praising God) the boy spoke, and would not stop speaking for a day and a night. And the Bishop handed the boy over to the Doctor who "with the help of the Bishop's prayers and blessing," cured his hairlessness. He, who had been ugly and miserable and dumb, became fair and ready of speech "with hair curling in comely fashion."

Berthun's second story is of the Nun who had been bled on the fourth day of the moon "when the light of the moon is waxing and the tide of the ocean rising"; which, as Archbishop Theodore had said, is very dangerous. "The arm was so much swollen that it could scarce be compassed with both hands and she lay in bed like to die through excess of pain."

The Abbess brought the Bishop to her, "for she believed that she would soon be better if he blessed her or laid his hands on her." Berthun went with them. The Bishop stood and said a prayer and blessed her and came away.

Presently Berthun was called back to see her. She said "As soon as the Bishop had said the prayer for me and given me his blessing and had gone out, immediately I began to mend; and though I have not yet recovered my strength, yet all the pain is quite gone both from my arm, where it was most burning, and from all my body, as if the Bishop had carried away the pain with him; notwithstanding the swelling of the arm still seems to remain."

When we came away she was well and "thus delivered from pain and death, returned praise to our Lord and Saviour, in company with His other servants who were there."

The two other stories which Berthun told to Bede about John of Beverley (who had ordained Bede both Deacon and Priest), are of the healings, of a Thane's Lady who was sick, and of a Thane's servant.

Here is the Thane's Lady.

She had been ill forty days. For three weeks she had not left her room. And John of Beverley was invited by the Thane to come and consecrate a church. Would he dine with the Thane afterwards? The Bishop must go back to the Monastery. The Thane pressed him and vowed he would give alms to the poor if the Bishop would come to his house. Berthun joined in. He also would give alms to the poor if the Bishop would go and bless the Thane's house. So the Bishop came. He had sent to the sick woman holy water which he had blessed for the consecration of the church. He had sent it on ahead of the party by the hand of one of the monks. She must drink some. And wash with some. And immediately she was healed and was strong and came to "present the cup" to the Bishop and "to us," and continued "serving us with meat and drink as she began, till dinner was over; following the example of the blessed Peter's wife's mother, who, having been sick of a fever, arose at the touch of our Lord's hand, and, having forthwith received health and strength, ministered to them."

Bede is a very brotherly writer. You feel quite at home as you read him, until, suddenly, in your reading, you light upon some sentence which is foreign to our modern thought. A man, riding over the battlefield where King Oswald fell, noticed that greener place, and "being a man of intelligence" concluded that this was a peculiarly holy place. "Being a man of intelligence!" It was common sense to conclude that!

The Briton passing the same place saw this ground

“greener and more beautiful than any other part of the field.”
“He had the wisdom to infer” that the dust of the place would be of use for curing people, “as was indeed the case.”

The miracles of Bede are far from being the chief interest of his History. Gregory, St. Augustine, Aidan, and King Oswald, Chad and Cuthbert and Wilfrid would suffer little if there were no miracles in their History. They are our heroes though the miracles are mostly forgotten.

And yet you could not remove all the miracles and leave the story true.

He would be a bold higher critic who should rule out as contrary to all “common sense” the wonderful results of John of Beverley’s holiness and the influence of his presence and his hands and his voice. Deny all these and you will, surely, get further away from a true story of England in 700 A.D.

And my purpose in dwelling upon this view of England, seen in this misty shining morning light, has been to appeal for a sympathy which I know is not always easy to win. Let the ancient English Bede, I say, serve as a link between modern England and ancient Galilee.

You cannot read St. Mark intelligently, unless you have at least this degree of sympathy: that you are ready to believe that others have honestly believed in miracle: unless you can imagine again a world where people think it “common sense” to believe in miracle.

“He, being a man of intelligence” knew at once that he was in a very holy place.

He, seeing the grass so green, “had the wisdom to infer” that, “as was indeed the case,” the dust of that holy ground works cures.

Such a mood does not merely see life differently. It makes it different. But I’m not insisting on how far it does that, just now.

I am saying that, as you approach a story about Galilee, 1900 years ago, you will be hopelessly out of sympathy, so that you will be unable to hear the truth that is in the story, if you cannot imagine men thinking otherwise than modern men are accustomed to think.

You will be shocked at St. Mark's being able to set down a story which it is, surely, quite clear he never doubted. You will be unable to conceive that Simon Peter could be a true man and say that he'd seen this and this and this; and yet it may be the simple truth that St. Peter would have said quite simply to anyone who asked him—"Oh, yes! I saw it."

And you, and I, and religion, and science, will have by degrees to decide what St. Mark's saying that St. Peter so affirmed, is worth to us. "It will be a miracle" if any scornful reader finds in the Gospels any truth. And yet truth may be there waiting to tell itself quite naturally to those who read the Gospels without scorn.

VIII

SAYINGS IN ST. MARK

Thy statutes have been my songs
in the house of my pilgrimage.

BESIDES the Gospel of St. Mark, of which we have been saying that it is the original from which, in very many places, our Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke have copied passages, there has been detected another original of which, in the same way, they made use. It is not difficult to trace this copying, if you have the parallel passages printed side by side. For you have the help of first seeing how they copied the St. Mark which is known to you. The Marcan original helps you to the unknown original. This unknown original consists of "Sayings" to a greater extent than the Marcan original. And before passing on to it, it will be useful to consider what the Marcan original tells of the Sayings of Jesus.

In St. Mark there are, of course, many Sayings.

Among these, let us distinguish between Sayings which arose out of special occasions and other Sayings which seem to have been deliberately composed into a regular form of words. I am leaving Mark xiii on one side, for it is thought to be a separate collection of Sayings.

In Mark xi and xii, there are five questions recorded. There is argument and reply: no premeditation.

(1) The Question, "By what authority?"

(2) The Question about Tribute to Cæsar.

(3) About the Resurrection.

(4) About the First Commandment.

(5) The Lord's Question in return about "the Son of David."

(1) The Lord's answer to the Question about Authority is a question in return: "The Baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men?"

(2) And again, the Question about Tribute is answered with the question, "Whose is the image and superscription?"

(3) The answer to the third is, "When they shall rise from the dead . . . they are as the angels," and "God is the God of the living."

(4) To the fourth: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . and thou shalt love thy neighbour" . . . from Deuteronomy and Leviticus.

Anyone thinking over these sayings must become aware of their extraordinary greatness. They sound so simple, and they are so great. They answer so quietly, but they say everything.

(1) That answer about John the Baptist is a claim quite simply made that a true man is a man of compelling power. The chief priests and the scribes and the elders are powerless to face it. There is the contrast of their cunning over against His truth, and there is the utter defeat of cunning in those few words: "And they answered Jesus and say, *We know not*, and Jesus saith unto them, *Neither tell I* you by what authority I do these things."

(2) There is the same simple greatness in the answer to the Pharisees and the Herodians when they have brought Him the penny. They are words a child might have used. "Whose head is this? Whose name is this?" Yet they speak a wisdom of which Christendom and its Holy Roman Emperors and Popes, and the greatest English Monarchs and Prelates have been, through the centuries, in search.

(3) And facing not merely the Sadducees, but the thought

of death, how simply He speaks of a Love which is too pure for death to reach it, of a Spirit which time cannot touch, and of a life which is safe from change in the keeping of God. He speaks as one to whom the Truth is so simply true.

(4) And again, when the Scribe comes asking a question which involves all the learning of the Rabbis of that day, He answers it with those two great texts which were as familiar to the minds of all pious Jews as the Roman pennies were to their hands.

These unpremeditated answers are made, out of a wisdom which moves quite naturally among the greatest things. The greatest works of Michael Angelo or the greatest passages of William Shakespeare are pure and simple and clear and true with something of this greatness. For this is the thought of the clearest, truest Mind, the thought of the Mind which, for example, thought the Lord's Prayer, whose Seven Sentences speak for the whole human heart and for every human heart. It has a greatness and simplicity like Nature's, which human nature so rarely reaches. For man to "be perfectly natural" is so rare that we think it unnatural.

Of these unpremeditated Sayings, a few have been recorded in St. Mark, and besides these there are other Sayings of another kind. They may be given to us as called out by some special occasion, but they have rather the look of deliberately composed Sayings such as the Lord wished to be remembered by His disciples.

There are more in the non-Markan document, but in St. Mark there are several.

They suggest that the Lord deliberately composed Sayings on various subjects, giving them a structure and form which would ensure their permanence. I remember, after a very unsuccessful attempt to read through an English

version of the Koran and to discover the secret of its singular power, being told by a missionary that it owed much to its rhythm, its alliterations, its almost rhyming endings of verses, and the like.

Mohammed has secured that, after thirteen hundred years, millions of men are daily repeating his words all over the world.

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds !
 The compassionate, the merciful !
 King on the day of reckoning !
 Thee only do we worship, and to thee do we cry for help.
 Guide Thou us on the straight path,
 The path of those to whom Thou hast been gracious ;
 with whom Thou art not angry, and who go not astray.

That is Sura 1 of the Koran. And, with so many more Suras, it lives among men who cannot read or write, after all these ages : Mohammed's very words, repeated, far from Medina or Mecca. These people have them, as we say, "by heart." And, as I look at those Sayings of Jesus, the opinion grows stronger that Jesus used the same method. He made poems whose form would ensure their being remembered. He gave symmetry to His Sayings.

We are familiar with the sound and feeling of translated Hebrew Poetry : its parallels, its contrasts, its responses, its alternations, its refrains. We know, for example, from the Lord Himself of that song the little Jews and Jewesses sang in their game of weddings and funerals :

We piped unto you and ye did not dance ;
 We wailed unto you and ye did not mourn.

I have found that a class of English children will among them remember, sometimes, after one reading, word for word, some Saying of Jesus, if their attention is drawn to the form of it before it is read to them.

The example in which I noticed this was the Saying about Prayer :

Ask, and it shall be given you ;
Seek, and ye shall find ;
Knock, and it shall be opened unto you ;
for every one that asketh receiveth ;
and he that seeketh findeth ;
and to him that knocketh it shall be opened

Or what man is there of you, who,
if his son shall ask him for a loaf,
will give him a stone ;
or if he ask for a fish,
will he give him a serpent ;
or if he shall ask an egg,
will he give him a scorpion ?

If ye then, being evil,
know how to give good gifts unto your children,
how much more shall your heavenly Father
give good things to them that ask him ?

Nearly every word is fastened into its place by some necessity of balance. St. Matthew has left out " if he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion ? " and, as your mind watches the rhythm of three and three and three, the absence of the sentence makes a gap and blank. Even without St. Luke's help, your mind would have felt restless for want of that lost egg.

St. Matthew's version is like an emerald ring with one of its precious stones missing, or like the girl's necklace of the Ten Silver Coins when one of them was gone, and she lit her lamp in the dark room and swept diligently until she found it.

If it be true then that Jesus composed Sayings which would run like rhymes in the head of His disciples, that will be a help towards discovering how much we may believe ourselves still to know of His words.

Mark iii, 23, has this Saying :

How can Satan cast out Satan ?

And if a kingdom be divided against itself,
that kingdom cannot stand.

And if a house be divided against itself,
that house cannot stand.

And if Satan hath risen up against himself and is divided,
he cannot stand but hath an end.

The symmetry is, no doubt, partly lost, since the words were spoken in Aramaic in which there was no word for "self." Luke xi, 17, speaks of "a house divided against a house."

This Saying, it is clear, was in the non-Marcan document. And it is also in St. Mark. And it is argued that St. Mark must have known and made some, though very little, use of the non-Marcan document. It seems more reasonable to argue, not that St. Mark found the Saying in any document, but that he found it in the common Christian memory. It is in St. Mark's Gospel, not because it was written down in some document, but because Jesus said it, and St. Peter had not forgotten it.

So the Saying survives in the two oldest documents. And the Saying is given by St. Mark in close connection with other words :

No one can enter into the house of the strong man,
and spoil his goods,
except he first bind the strong man ;
and then he will spoil his house.

The other document—the lost document used by St. Matthew and St. Luke—went on with much the same words. But St. Matthew and St. Luke give most of this second stanza, if I may call it that, of the Saying. And St. Luke adds a third stanza : about the Spirit wandering in waterless places and returning to " my " house. In St. Matthew the

two stanzas have been broken off from one another, and one is in xii, 29, 30, and the other in xii, 43, 44, 45.

The comparison of these different passages (Mark iii, 23-27 ; Luke xi, 17-26 ; Matthew xii, 25-29, 30, 43-45) gives an idea of how these Sayings were liable to be broken when their form was lost in a Greek translation. But there is enough left of a symmetry of composition to suggest how it was that they survived in Christian memories.

The case of the two " stanzas " given by St. Luke, (1) of the Strong Man, armed, guarding his court, and (2) the Unclean Spirit returning to his house, is one of many examples of a use of companion pictures, side by side.

It seems to have been in the manner of Jesus to use these parallel illustrations.

St. Mark has given an example in ii, 21, 22.

No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth
on an old garment,
else that which should fill it up taketh from it,
. . . and a worse rent is made.
And no man putteth new wine
into old wine-skins :
else the wine will burst the skins,
and the wine perisheth and the skins. . . .

There are words added by St. Mark in explanation ; and St. Luke, in his copy of St. Mark, has got further still from a simple proverbial Saying.

Another Saying given in St. Mark is of Lamps and Light :
iv, 21, 22 :

Is the lamp brought
to be put under the bushel,
or under the bed,
and not be put on the lamp-stand ?
For there is nothing hid,
save that it should be manifested,

Neither was anything made secret,
but that it should come to light.

It is of interest to see how this " lamp " has fared in the different Gospels.

Here, by its light, you can see what was Jesus' intention in committing His Truth to the faithful listeners. The words the chosen listeners hear are being put carefully away *in order that* they may be brought out later, safe, for the use of all the world. This *purpose* is lost sight of in St. Matthew and in St. Luke.

Indeed, in St. Matthew and St. Luke, the earthenware lamp is broken. It must have been in two pieces in the non-Markan document they used. Some page must have got torn very long ago. In St. Matthew the two pieces are five chapters apart. In St. Luke the Saying begins in xi, 33. It has been broken off and St. Luke mends the break : finishes it off as best he can in verse 36. And you find its other half at xii, 2, 3.

On the other hand, the Saying in St. Mark iv, 24 :

Take heed what ye hear :

with what measure ye mete

it shall be measured unto you

and more shall be given unto you ;

for he that hath, to him shall be given,

and he that hath not,

from him shall be taken away even that which he hath :

this Saying seems to be broken pieces of more than one Saying, one of which is found complete in St. Luke vi, 36-38 :

Judge not,

and ye shall not be judged :

and condemn not,

and ye shall not be condemned :

release, and ye shall be released :

give, and it shall be given unto you ;

good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running
over,

shall they give into your bosom (the fold of your cloak)
for with what measure ye mete
it shall be measured to you again.

The corn-dealers in Syrian markets sitting on the ground, among their corn-heaps, with their corn-measure to fill, are still a commentary on this Saying: pressing down, shaking, pouring on more grain, fussing with a great show of bounty. This was the picture which fledged the arrow-Saying of Jesus, of which St. Mark has only kept the arrow-head, or moral: "with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you."

In Mark ix, 43, is another Saying which gives an example of the use of a quotation from the Old Testament to close the Saying. This happens several times in the Sayings of Jesus.

And if thy hand cause thee to stumble,
cut it off:

it is good for thee to enter into life maimed,
rather than having thy two hands
to be cast into hell . . .

where "their worm dieth not and the fire is not
quenched."

And if thy foot cause thee to stumble,
cut it off:

it is good for thee to enter into life halt,
rather than having thy two feet
to be cast into hell

where "their worm dieth not and the fire is not
quenched."

And if thine eye cause thee to stumble,
cast it out:

it is good for thee to enter into [life] with one eye,

rather than having two eyes
to be cast into hell

where "their worm dieth not and the fire is not
quenched."

That is giving a reading not accepted in the Revised Version. Whether the refrain comes these three times or not, the Saying ends on those words of Isaiah lxvi, 24.

In Mark iv, 31, is another use of quotation, akin to the use of the glory of Solomon in the poem of the Lilies.

St. Mark has it. And St. Luke had already copied it from the non-Marcan document when he added to his own Gospel out of St. Mark's. St. Matthew has used both St. Mark and St. Luke's original. Putting the different versions together you get something like the following: Mark iv, 30; Matthew xiii, 31; Luke xiii, 18.

How shall we liken the kingdom of God?

And whereunto shall we liken it?

It is like a grain of mustard seed,

which a man took and sowed in his field . . .

and when it is sown, it groweth up

and becometh greater than all the herbs

so that the "birds of the heaven" can "lodge" under
the shadow "thereof."

The last line is a half-playful allusion to the Great Tree of Nebuchadnezzar, in Daniel iv. (But I have seen the mustard "tree" growing twelve feet high in Esdraelon.) Comparing St. Luke you get a suggestion of a second stanza:

Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? . . .

It is like unto leaven

which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal
. . . till it was all leavened.

Another Saying found in both the original Gospels is Mark viii, 34, which is copied, Matthew xvi, 24, and Luke ix, 23. And broken pieces of the same Saying from the

non-Marcan Gospel in Matthew x, 38 and 32, and Luke xvii, 33 and xii, 8.

If any man would come after me,
let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow
me.

For whosoever would save his life
shall lose it.

And whosoever shall lose his life
shall save it.

For what doth it profit a man,
to gain the whole world,
and forfeit his life?

For what shall a man give
in exchange for his life?

For whosoever shall confess me before men,
him will I also confess before my Father which is in
heaven.

But whosoever shall deny me before men,
Him will I also deny before my Father which is in
heaven.

That is choosing words from the different Greek versions :
choosing, each time, the simpler words.

Mark x, 23, has a Saying which has been given the place
of a remark made by Jesus as the Rich Man goes away
sorrowful. How readily it runs into a sorrowful little
song!

Children, how hard it is
for a rich man
to enter into the kingdom of God!
It is easier
for a camel
to go through a needle's eye
than for a rich man
to enter into the Kingdom of God.

And, a little lower down, there is a kind of rhythm in the further saying on the same subject.

There is no man that hath left
house or brethren or sisters or mother or father or
children or lands,
for my sake and for the gospel's sake
but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time,
houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and
children and lands, with persecution
and in the world to come eternal life.

St. Matthew, in his copying, has made a gap in the symmetry. St. Luke has made it impossible to keep it symmetrical among other changes, by introducing "wife." But in St. Mark it reads like a description which Christians might have learnt to chant, of what must have been the actual experience of early Christianity: the Christianity, no doubt, of the disciples in Galilee at the beginning, and of the Brethren, the Saints of St. Paul's day, as we read of it and feel it in the Epistle to Philippi, for example.

In Mark x, 38, in the answer to James and John about the Cup and the Baptism, you hear the kind of rhythm to which I allude.

In Mark x, 42, is the Saying:

Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over
the Gentiles

lord it over them;

and their great ones

exercise authority over them . . .

But whosoever would become great among you,
shall be your minister:

and whosoever would be first among you,
shall be servant of all.

For verily the Son of Man came,

not to be ministered unto, but to minister,

and to give his life a ransom for many.

St. Luke (xxii, 25) gives it at the scene of the Last Supper. My suggestion is that it would not have been only said once. It is of interest to compare the two versions.

The Kings of the Gentiles

have lordship over them ;

and they that have authority over them
are called Benefactors.

But ye shall not be so :

but he that is greater among you,

let him become as the younger,

and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

For whether is greater

But I am as he that serveth.

One more quotation from St. Mark is xi, 23 :

Whosoever shall say unto this mountain,

Be thou taken up and cast into the sea ;

if he doubt not in his heart . . .

he shall have it.

I have seen it argued that this must belong to the ministry in Galilee. And yet what words could more naturally suggest themselves, in the place in which St. Mark sets them ? On the Mount of Olives, the grey mountain looks down, away, eastward to the deep hollow and cleft in the land where the blue Dead Sea lies, twenty miles away, and three or four thousand feet below. And St. Luke has words which suggest another " stanza " of the Saying : xvii, 6 :

If ye have faith

as a grain of mustard seed

ye would say unto this sycamine tree

Be thou rooted up . . .

It has seemed to me worth while to attend first to the manner of the Sayings of Jesus, as they are given in St. Mark, before passing on to the non-Markan document which

is, to a far greater extent, taken up with the Sayings. I have been suggesting that Jesus composed Sayings whose symmetry ensured their being remembered, sentence balanced against sentence, parallels and contrasts, sometimes every word, almost, indispensable. If it were not there its neighbours would be calling for it. Even in a translation of a translation, those reflexions, echoes, repetitions, parallels, contrasts, contradictions of thought make a kind of mental rhythm.

And again, there is the use of something like stanzas: a habit of giving two, or even three, illustrations of the same thought. Readers of Dante will have noticed his similar use of companion-pictures.

And sometimes there is a use of a refrain at the end of two or more stanzas.

And there is a tendency to make the last line of a saying bear the emphasis and weight of the Saying. The last line is a climax expressing so great a truth that the Saying could not be imagined as going on to say anything further. Or the last line closes the Saying with some quotation from the Old Testament, some sacred sentence, which sounds like a final word; or like the Great Bell on which bellringers end each change—the great unchanging Bell.

These are characteristics which may be noticed as “in the manner” of Jesus, as it is illustrated in the Gospel of St. Mark.

IX

ANOTHER ORIGINAL GOSPEL

He sendeth the springs into the rivers:
which run among the hills.

THE author of this chapter will not have written it in vain, and he has the audacity to assert that the Reader of it will not have read it in vain, if the author can prevail upon the reader to behave in the following manner :

The reader will provide himself with a copy of St. Luke's Gospel in which he feels at liberty to make pencil marks.

And he will provide himself with three pencils of different colours. Perhaps the colours chosen for the Mosaic tabernacle-curtains will offer themselves most readily: blue and purple and scarlet.

The reader will then set out to make marks to distinguish between the three materials of which St. Luke's Gospel is made :

(1) Material copied from St. Mark.

(2) Material copied from another Gospel which has been used by St. Matthew and St. Luke, and not by St. Mark.

(3) Material used by St. Luke only.

The first two chapters and the last five-and-a-half chapters are different in some ways from the rest of the Gospel, and the writer does not ask the reader to mark more than the chapters iii to xix.

If the reader agrees to do as he is asked, his first object will be to set on one side the passages which were latest added to the Gospel: the material, that is, which St. Luke

copied from St. Mark. I propose that these Marcan passages be marked with the red pencil. They are: iv, 31-43; v, 12—vi, 11; viii, 4—ix, 50; xviii, 15-43; xix, 29 onwards. That is five pieces.

Set them aside as additions made in a sort of second edition of St. Luke's Gospel. The passages which remain will be the (more or less re-edited) first edition of St. Luke's Gospel.

When your scarlet pencilling is done, you will be left with St. Luke's Gospel from iii, 2—xix, 28, with about 180 verses removed.

There will remain five hundred verses waiting to be marked either with your purple pencil, for the Gospel used by St. Matthew and St. Luke, or with your blue pencil, for St. Luke's own collection. The passages to be marked are these:—iii; iv, 1-30; v, 1-11; vi, 12-49; vii—viii, 3; ix, 51—xviii, 14, and xix, 1-27.

These five hundred verses will divide thus:—

Blue, is St. Luke's own:—iii, 1 and 2, and 10-14, and 23-38. And again, iv, 14-30 and v, 1-11; vii, 11-17 and 36-50; viii, 1, 2, 3; ix, 51-56; x, 25—xi, 1; xii, 13-21; xiii, 11-30; xiv—xviii, 14.

And Purple for the passages common to St. Luke and St. Matthew:—iii, 2-22; iv, 1-13; vi, 13—vii, 35; ix, 57—x, 27; xi, 2—xii, 12; xii, 22—xiii, 9; xiii, 18-21 and 31-35; xiv, 25—xv, 7.

These nine passages, purple-pencilled, amount altogether to about 270 verses.

It is in these 270 verses that you may know that you are reading from the Gospel which once lay open before the writers of the Gospels known now to us as "St. Matthew" and "St. Luke."

"Dull would he be of soul who could" . . . read there and feel no stir of excitement.

I give you the end of a golden string :
Only wind it into a ball,—
It will lead you in at Heaven's gate
Built in Jerusalem's wall.

But it has to be admitted that this clue of golden string has been snapped in thirteen unlucky places, and tied together in a most confused disorder. And unknown lengths of it are missing. St. Luke has saved many bits, but they are in a shocking tangle. And it is of little use to look to St. Matthew for help, for he cares less for order than St. Luke.

One can only guess what pieces are lying unidentified—because only one of them has copied them—either in St. Luke or in St. Matthew. But something does come of a study of these passages. It is a help to bear in mind what has been inferred about the manner of the Sayings of Jesus from the Sayings found in St. Mark.

And the use made by St. Luke and St. Matthew of St. Mark suggests how they would use this other original gospel. And a person can look about for ends of this much-broken thread, if by chance, out of this tangle, there may be found pieces which are apt to join each other.

Meanwhile, since it is necessary to have some name for the thing and some idea of the nature of the thing we are looking for, let me give you the customary name, and hazard a suggestion as to the document, although, for different reasons, I do both, with a certain diffidence.

For the proposed name is, it must be admitted, an unimaginative name. And the fault of the suggestion to be hazarded is, perhaps, that it is in danger of being too imaginative.

You have to bring together two factors which are very distant : a very early Christian tradition, and a very modern German study of the documents. The tradition is that of

Papias which has already been spoken of: this tradition that St. Matthew wrote some form of Gospel.

You will remember that, about a hundred years after Jesus was in Galilee and Jerusalem, Papias of Hierapolis, who wasn't very clever, and who would rather talk to living people, than read dead books, set down what he had heard from the Elders: "what Andrew and what Peter said, or what was said by Philip, or by Thomas, or by James, or by John, or by Matthew."

"But," says Eusebius, "concerning Matthew, he writes as follows: 'So then Matthew wrote the Logia (or Oracles) in the Hebrew (or Aramaic) language, and everyone interpreted (translated) them as he was able.'" Now it is natural enough to think of St. Matthew as the disciple who would write down, when it began to seem desirable that they should be written down, the memories of Jesus, especially of His Sayings. Think of St. Matthew as a real man. He would by trade be, before his call, the man who had to have "the pen of a ready writer." He would sit at the toll, writing all that passed, in his ledger.

Astonishing! He takes down everything! In-coming and out-going camels, people, donkeys; men porters and women portresses; women with shapeless bundles on their heads, or faggots of thorns and brushwood for fuel; a man driving a calf; five camels tied like barges on a stream, bow to stern, with long cables; strings of camels with heaped up luggage; some girls with market baskets: what is in them? loaves? fishes? eggs? A shepherd with sheep that follow him; a merchant coming from the East—with one pearl, perhaps; so many asses with loads of jars of pickled fish going away west; fish such as "Zebedee & Sons" and "Jonas & Sons" catch at Bethsaida (or Fisherton), the suburb along the shore—Galilee fish, famous as far as Rome itself; a boy driving a donkey smothered

under a stack of white clover ; or another lad coming in rags towards his home, with nothing to toll, muttering some words over, which he's going to say : " Make me one of the farmhands," " one of the hired servants " ; girls with ~~dates~~ or apricots, or oranges, or almonds ; traders in wheat and wine and olive-oil ; this toll-keeper can note down what he wants to remember—few people in Bethsaida could do the like—Matthew has the pen of a ready writer.

So then, there in Papias, you find, about 130 A.D., a belief in St. Matthew's collection of Aramaic " Sayings."

And then, far away, at our end of the World and Time, you find the Scholars working at the two Gospels, " St. Matthew's " and " St. Luke's " and finding there, behind those two Greek writings, traces of an older Greek writing : not all of it there : but enough to show what kind of writing it was : a book they've both copied, though we cannot see their original in this case, as we can see their original where they are copying the Gospel of St. Mark. This supposed, unknown original from which they copied, of which we can recover fragments and mark them with our modern purple pencilling, was in Greek, in Greek which looks, they say, like a Greek version of an Aramaic original. It is, surely, exactly such as might have been one of those interpretations, made when, as Papias says, everyone " interpreted as he was able " the Aramaic Sayings of Matthew. It is, surely, very tempting to bring together the two facts, and to suppose that the passages we have marked with our purple lead, are from one of the Greek " interpretations " of those " Hebrew " " Logia."

Meanwhile the Gospel from which were copied our purple-marked passages must have a name. English scholars hesitated how to name it. And while they were rejecting

one another's suggestions, the German scholars have given it a commonplace, business-like, working name. They have labelled it "Q": Q being the first letter of "Quelle," the German word for source or origin or spring or well-head. "Q" is a dull name to give to what may be St. Matthew's own notes about Jesus of Nazareth.

Here is a collection of words of His and we do not know what besides,—and we are to label it like that! But do not let us waste time, quarrelling with a name. After all, "Q" stands for all sorts of meanings. Has "Q" not stood for a gallant battery of guns and horses and men? It won four V.C.'s in South Africa, did "Q." Or—I saw a fishing boat, perhaps not much larger than Simon Peter's and Andrew's, at a little port in Cornwall, not long ago, flying the yellow flag, the flag "Q." It spoke of Quarantine. It warned other ships of some, more or less, deadly infection. How many fancies that sign might suggest to an idle walker on a pleasant afternoon! The flag might mean such a tragic voyage as we used to read of in Boys' Books of Adventure,—“all hands,” say, “down” with a yellow fever, or it might speak only of some one disconsolate cabin-boy swollen or sallowed with some childish ailment. Such unexplored possibilities might lie in that sign of the flag “Q”!

Bear with the Letter, then, as the Name: the name cannot dull the contents of the document it names. And “Q” we say, may be the Collection of Oracles, St. Matthew's Aramaic, translated in Greek. The Reader will have to consider, as he reads the marked passages, how far the nature of their contents seems to bear out the suggestion.

What are the contents? What is left to us of “Q”?

X

“ Q ”

I give you the end of a golden string.

WHAT is left to us of “ Q ” ?

In St. Luke iii, after St. Luke's own introduction, you have the story of the Baptist. St. Luke seems to have made additions of his own to “ Q.” But it is “ Q's ” story. Then, in verse 21, Jesus comes and is baptized. In chapter iv, “ Q ” tells of the Temptation. In vi, 13, there is the call of the Twelve. There is a very brief notice of the multitudes crowding “ to hear ” and “ to be healed ” and at vi, 20, you come to “ Q's ” “ Sayings.” They are given in St. Matthew, v, vi, vii—his Sermon on the Mount, as well as here, in St. Luke's “ Sermon in the Level Place.” A comparison of the two Sermons suggests what was written in “ Q.”

At the beginning, St. Luke has four Blessings and four Woes. St. Matthew has nine Blessings and no Woes.

It will be felt that in St. Luke you are nearer the original words.

Which is the fresher, the more direct—to say to certain poor people gathered round Him, poor people who have followed Him and followed Him, “ Blessed are ye ” . . . the poor, the hungry—or to say a great truth which shall go out into all the world, “ Blessed are the poor *in spirit* ” and “ Blessed are they that hunger and thirst *after righteousness* ” ? No reader can look and see what “ St. Matthew ” has done to these Sayings without a great reverence for the

spirit of his changes. Yet it cannot be doubted that St. Luke's version is the nearer to the words originally spoken, St. Matthew, in v, 11, has left the word "ye" still standing.

I.

Blessed are ye poor :

for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are ye that hunger now :

for ye shall be filled.

Blessed are ye that weep now :

for ye shall laugh.

Blessed are ye when men shall hate you,

and when they shall revile you,

and say all manner of evil against you . . .

Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy ;

for great is your reward in heaven :

for in the same manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

2.

But woe unto you that are rich !

for ye have received your consolation.

Woe unto you that are full now !

for ye shall hunger.

Woe unto you that laugh now !

for ye shall mourn and weep.

Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you ! . . .

for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets.

Changes can only be suggested, in one copy of the Words, where you have the help of the other copy, and St. Matthew does not help out St. Luke here.

We cannot "restore" the passages. We have learned at Church, most of us, to dread the Restorer.

But if we saw signs, here and there, along an aisle-wall,

of an Early English arcade, broken dog-tooth, and deep clean-cut mouldings, at intervals, remaining in spite of later masonry, our eye would be busy telling us that there is symmetry here still, enough to indicate a still more perfect symmetry that has been here. As to the Woes, it cannot be doubted that “ Q ” included them. For St. Luke was not the man to add them.

In those first verses, St. Luke helps most. But in what follows, a comparison of St. Luke and St. Matthew suggests that St. Matthew has given passages of “ Q ” left out by St. Luke.

For example, in Matthew v, 21-48, you find a symmetrical Saying of four stanzas.

Four times you have : Ye have heard that it was said . . . But I say unto you. . . .

The symmetry is broken by St. Matthew, who has added a passage (25, 26) which is shewn by St. Luke's use of it, (Luke xii, 58, 59) to belong elsewhere.

But here you have four stanzas, closing with a great sentence (an allusion to Deut. xviii, 13)—Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

St. Luke leaves out nearly all of the Saying, but one passage, Luke vi, 29-36, remains, to suggest that this is where the Saying was found in “ Q.”

Matthew vi goes on with another Saying. Again he has confused the symmetry, by introducing here the Lord's Prayer, which St. Luke gives elsewhere. But if this be set on one side, there remain three stanzas, on alms given in secret, on prayers said in secret, and on fasting in secret, each ending with a refrain, “ and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee.”

Pass on and consider the form of the Saying of St. Luke vi, 41, 42 and Matthew vii, 3, 4, 5 :

And why beholdest thou the mote

That is in thy brother's eye,
 but considerest not the beam
 that is in thine own eye?

Or how canst thou say to thy brother,
 Let me cast out the mote that is in thine eye,
 And Lo, the beam
 is in thine eye?

Thou hypocrite,
 cast out first the beam
 out of thine own eye;
 and then shalt thou see clearly
 to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

You have here an example of that kind of symmetry of words and thought, that return of a kind of refrain, which we were saying were "in the manner" of Jesus, and ensured that His Words should be remembered.

There are other Sayings in this Collection. Luke vi, 43, 46, "The Good and Bad Trees," and "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord?" a fragment which is to be compared with Matthew vii, 21. Put the two together, and you will have something like a poem of twelve lines, with a last line quoting from Psalm VI, the awful words: "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." And this series of Sayings seems to have ended with Luke vi, 47, and in Matthew vii, 24: the Houses on the Rock and on the Sand.

Putting the two versions together, you get some such words as these:

I.

Everyone that heareth my words
 and doeth them,
 is like a man which built his house
 upon a rock,
 And the rain descended and the floods came and the
 winds blew

and beat upon that house,
and it fell not,
for it was built upon the rock.

2.

But he that heareth my words
and doeth them not,
is like a man which built his house
upon the sand,
And the rain descended and the floods came and the
winds blew
and beat upon that house
and it fell
and great was the fall thereof.

That is using, throughout, words taken from one copy or the other, of "Q."

St. Luke, as sometimes happens, has been less at home than St. Matthew among Holy Land conditions.

He makes the folly to consist of bad building. But the folly is one, the thought of which haunts "Q," such a folly as the folly of a man who builds where there must inevitably be ruin: the sands left by last year's flood prove that the next flood must wash the house away.

At vii, St. Luke gives from "Q" the one detailed story of a miracle which is left to us as told in "Q"—the healing of the Centurion's Servant. It seems to stand there as a reproachful example of Gentile faith. It and the Baptist stories shew that "Q" did not consist of Sayings only.

At vii, 18, St. Luke, using "Q," goes on with the story of St. John the Baptist, and our Lord's Sayings about him. The manner in which "Q" has been shattered is illustrated by the fact that at vii, 28, a piece has been broken off which lies, a fragment, by itself, in Luke xvi, 16.

At verse 35, "Q" is lost sight of and only reappears at

ix, 57. There you find "Q" giving an account of Three Disciples who hesitated and of the Disciples who went out into the Villages. Notice how homely are the figures used in two of those answers :

the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head.

And the figure of the ploughman ploughing his straight furrow. He must not look over his shoulder.

They breathe a country air. They are rustic Sayings : one almost fails to notice how notable they are. As people might have gone by a ploughman in Ayrshire, and not known it was Robert Burns.

When you come to the story of the Seventy you are able to compare "Q" and St. Mark, for St. Mark vi, 7, has a similar sending of the Twelve.

They have each their own characteristics. It is not only the numbers Twelve and Seventy that differ.

When the disciples are forbidden to take money, St. Mark speaks of copper, St. Luke of silver, St. Matthew of gold.

I suppose, in our arithmetic, here, a copper penny would be of more value than twelve silver shillings, and a silver shilling of more value than twenty golden pounds.

St. Mark says that they are to take "nothing for their journey, save a staff only, no bread, no wallet, no copper in your girdle." St. Luke speaks here of a purse. "But go shod with sandals;" St. Mark has. A staff, shoes, no bread, no wallet, no money—that is St. Mark. But "Q" had "no wallet, *nor* staff, *no* shoes."

Now if you prefer copper to silver and silver to gold, you may argue that "Q" is the truer, because the needier, version here. And yet I do not feel it to be so. For I do not think originally there was anything like a conscious adoption of the part of the "Poor Men." St. Francis and

his brothers consciously adopted it. St. Francis heard Matthew x, 10, read as the Gospel for St. Matthias' Day at Mass, on February 24th, 1209 A.D. He threw away stick and scrip and purse and shoes, and obeyed. We could have warned him that it was likely he was listening to the less authentic and original account. We have, I think the advantage of St. Francis in that particular. Let us refuse to surrender it, and let us think of the Disciples of Jesus as very much bent on business: too much so indeed to attend to anything but getting the business done. If shoes help, they'll take shoes. If a staff is any good, they'll have one.

I don't know where the Rhythmical Saying begins. Perhaps at Luke x, 3:

Go your ways:

behold I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves:
be ye therefore (St. Matthew adds) wise as serpents and
harmless as doves.

There are traces of symmetry here:

Go not from house to house

and into whatsoever city ye enter and they receive you,
eat such things as they set before you,

and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them,

The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

*But into whatsoever city ye shall enter, and they receive
you not*

Go out into the streets thereof, and say,

Even the dust from your city, that cleaveth to our feet
we do wipe off against you:

Howbeit know this, that *the kingdom of God is come
nigh unto you.*

In Acts xiii, 51 St. Luke makes St. Paul obey, in A.D. 47 or so. And St. Paul must have known some of these Sayings. Compare II Cor. vi, written perhaps twenty-six

years after the Beatitudes were spoken, "as sorrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich."

In "Q" then they had no staff, no shoes. They had directions where to go, how to lodge. Those pairs of them, were to go to such villages and towns as Jesus Himself would visit later. They stay. They heal the sick. They tell people, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. It has been noticed that this is the message of Jesus and not of the Baptist. They go on their way; in peace, or not in peace: not in peace, sometimes, but with threatening, denunciation, woe. In "Q" there are many "Woes."

There follows in Luke x, 12, a Saying, "if they receive you not":

Woe unto thee, Chorazin!

Woe unto thee, Bethsaida!

for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon

which were done in you,

They would have repented long ago,

in sack-cloth and ashes.

Howbeit I say unto you,

It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon

in that day than for you.

And thou Capernaum,

Shalt thou be exalted unto heaven?

Thou shalt go down unto Hades:

for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom

which were done in thee

It would have remained until this day.

Howbeit I say unto thee,

It shall be more tolerable for Sodom

in that day than for thee.

He that receiveth you receiveth me,
 and he that receiveth me
 receiveth him that sent me ;
 And he that rejecteth you rejecteth me,
 and he that rejecteth me
 rejecteth him that sent me.

This is combining Matthew xi, 21-24 ; x, 40, and Luke x, 12-16.

In close connection with these Sayings would come, in " Q," a series of Sayings which is found, in great part, in Luke xii. And then, perhaps, the return of the Disciples given in Luke x, 17. This is a moment of supreme importance in the Story given by " Q." St. Luke x, 21, and in St. Matthew xi, 25.

" In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and prudent, and didst reveal them unto babes."

But at the end of Luke x, 17-24, the thread of " Q " is snapped.

There is a shred of " Q " at x, 25. And another at xi, 2, 3, 4. And another at xi, 9-13. At xi, 14-32, you come upon another length of " Q." But it has, clearly, no connection with its neighbours. We shall return to it later.

In this confusion the best " join " that offers itself is to connect the " Q " passages in Luke x, 1-16, with the " Q " passages in Luke xii.

There you find a series of Sayings of which the best known, perhaps, is Luke xii, 22, and in Matthew vi, 25.

Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat,
 Nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.
 Is not the life more than the food,
 And the body than the raiment ?

Consider the ravens,

They sow not, neither reap, nor gather into barns ;

And your heavenly Father feedeth them.

Of how much more value are ye than the birds !

And which of you by being anxious

Can add one cubit to his stature ?

And why are ye anxious concerning raiment ?

Consider the lilies, how they grow ;

They toil not neither do they spin ;

Yet I say unto you, even Solomon in all his glory

was not arrayed like one of these.

But if God doth so clothe the grass in the field,

which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven ;

Shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith ?

Be not therefore anxious, saying,

What shall we eat ? or what shall we drink ?

or wherewithal shall we be clothed ?

For after all these things do the Gentiles seek ;

for your heavenly Father knoweth

that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first his kingdom,

And all these things shall be added unto you.

Another Saying which seems to belong to this series (Matthew vi, 24, 25) is the Saying, No man can serve two masters.

St. Luke has removed it to xvi, 13, to serve as a preface to the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

Even there the verse has got separated from the story it prefaces by two broken bits of "Q," Luke xvi, 16, and xvii, 17 and 18, which lie there like broken pot-sherds of precious ware lost in a corner.

Sometimes for obscure, and sometimes for obvious reasons, St. Luke has misplaced or mislaid the following

verses of this Series: xi, 9-13; xi, 33; 34, 35; xii, 10; xiv, 26, 27 and 34; xvi, 9 and 13.

And he has divided what remains into three separate pieces: xii, 2-12; 22-34; 49-53.

So thrown about as are these fragments, it may seem foolhardy to assert that there was ever a whole poem here. And yet if the word poetry is not to include the Saying about the scarlet anemones and Solomon in all his glory, there will be some of us who will ask, What is the use, then, of this word poetry?

And we may call for witness, here, one who has a right to speak. It is not very often that William Shakespeare allows his own voice to be heard, yet there are rare moments when he speaks, and speaks, with a reverence which cannot be misunderstood, of his Christian faith.

In *Richard III*, Clarence says:

As you hope to have redemption
By Christ's dear blood shed for our grievous sins.

And in *Henry IV*:

those holy fields
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nail'd
For our advantage on the bitter cross.

And Richard II's "scruples" that "do set the word itself against the word: as thus, "Come, little ones," and then again,

"It is hard to come as for a camel
"To thread the postern of a small needle's eye."

And Portia:

we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
the deeds of mercy . . .

William Shakespeare tells some of us that he had a feeling of which he won't speak often or much, for Jesus of Nazareth: and when he uses the Words of Jesus, it is as a poet remembering a Poet.

The tradition is that Shakespeare himself played the part of "Adam," in *As you like it*. If so, he quoted words from the Poetry of Luke xii :

He that doth the ravens feed
Yea, providently caters for the sparrow.

And the same sparrow flies across the scene in *Hamlet*, V, ii, 230.

We have, then, in Luke xii, the Series of Sayings, the verses about the sparrows and ravens and lilies. But at xii, 35, there is an intrusion of another Saying, about Watching.

Why does it come in here ?

I suggest that it is the word "thief" which is to blame. Verse 39 connected itself with verse 33. The "thief drawing near" in verse 33 attracted the whole "Q" passage with the master of the house in it, who did not know "in what hour the thief was coming"; Luke xii, 35 to 46 or 48. In the same way the "barns" which the ravens have not (xii, 24) attracted the "barns" of the Rich Fool which were never built (xii, 18-21). So, later, in a collection of three disconnected stories of Suppers, in xiv, "the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind," in verse 13 account for the presence of the story of "the poor, the maimed, the blind, the lame" invited to the supper of the king, in verse 21.

St. Luke, it is clear, feels free to use "Q" as suits his own purpose. Words of "Q" suggest to him additions of his own. The John Baptist passage, for example (vii, 18-35), has suggested two other passages of St. Luke's own. In vii, 22, "the dead are raised up" and in vii, 34, Jesus is called "a friend of sinners." The "dead are raised up" suggests the story of Nain, verses 11-17. And the "sinners" of verse 34 draw in the beautiful passage (36-50) about the "woman which was a sinner."

To return to the passage xii, 35-46 which has come now into company to which it did not belong in “ Q,” it may be suggested here, that “ Q ” had two “ stanzas,” one of which is here (Luke xii, 35, etc.) and the other in Matthew xxv. The Girls who wait for the Bridegroom. Men with Lamps and Girls with Lamps.

Such pairs of companion pictures (as we said) are found many times. Often it is one picture for the men and boys and another for women and girls.

One stanza for the man in the garden, and another for the woman in the house : the Mustard Seed and the Leaven.

Or again, the Man and his Lost Sheep, and the Girl and her Lost Piece of Silver (xv, 3 and 8).

Or again, the Two Men on one bed, and the Two Women grinding at one mill (xvii, 34, 35).

So the pictures in xi, 31, 32, balance one another : the Queen of the South, and the Men of Nineveh.

This pairing, as of February birds, characteristic of the “ Q ” Sayings, suggests that St. Matthew may have found his pairs of parallels in “ Q.” Matthew xiii, 24-30 and xiii, 47-50 makes one pair of companion-stories. “ The Tares and the Wheat,” and “ The Bad Fish and the Good Fish.” And the other pair has got in between them. Matthew xiii, 44, and xiii, 45, 46. “ The Treasure hid in the Field,” and “ The Pearl.”

Whether “ Q ” had these “ Men waiting for their Lord,” and the “ Bridesmaids waiting for the Bridegroom,” or not, “ Q ” had Sayings (xii, 35-46 or 48) about Watching. Some such Sayings must have been known to St. Paul, for he says he had already taught them to the Thessalonians, a long way off from the Holy Land, about 51 A.D.

At xii, 49, it is the approaching time of trial, the Temptation prayed against in the Lord’s Prayer, that is being spoken of.

I came to cast fire upon the earth.

Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth ?

I tell you, Nay ; but rather division. . . .

This Saying ends with a quotation from Micah vii, 6 :
 " They shall be divided son against father, daughter against mother . . ." xii, 53. And there the thread is, once again, broken.

But if with the help of Matthew x, 34-37, you will look on, fifty or sixty verses, to xiv, 26, the break there seems to join well with the break here.

It joins like Ezekiel's scattered bones. Bone to his bone. xii, 53.—They shall be divided, son against father, daughter against mother. And xiv, 26.—If any man cometh unto me and hateth not his own father and mother . . . he cannot be my disciple.

This is followed by a Saying in two stanzas, about Counting the Cost : the Tower that is not finished : and the Army that has to make terms.

There remain, now, some fifty verses of " Q " which we have passed by, in trying to get on with the winding of our Golden String into its ball. These fifty verses are in three lengths.

(1) xi, 14-32.

(2) xi, 42-52.

(3) xii, 54-59 ; xiii, 1-9, and 31-35.

(1) The first is a passage of nineteen verses. It seems to me a passage of singular interest. The courteous Reader will permit me to return to it later.

The two other passages, xi, 42-52 and xii, 54—xiii, 35, belong to the scenes of the final antagonism of the Jews to Jesus.

(2) Luke xi, 42-52 = Matthew xxiii, 11-36. St. Matthew gives the fuller quotation from " Q." St. Luke has toned it down and shortened it. The Seven Woes become Four.

The details of the final indictment of Pharisees have less interest to St. Luke than to St. Matthew.

This passage of Woe to the Scribes and Pharisees is in the same mood as the next passage from "Q."

(3) Luke xii, 54-59 ; xiii, 1-9, 31-35 = Matthew xvi, 1-3 ; v, 25, 26 ; xxiii, 37-39. These begin with a Saying in which the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew xvi, 1) are spoken to as hypocrites. They cannot "discern the signs of the times," because they are not honest men. They "desire," as Bishop Butler said, "to be deceived."

The passage differs a little in Luke xii, 54 and Matthew xvi, 1. St. Matthew, I suppose, would know the skies which Jesus knew, better than St. Luke knew them.

When it is evening, ye say
It will be fair weather :
for the heaven is red :
And in the morning,
It will be foul weather
for the heaven is red and lowring.
Ye know how to discern
The face of the heaven ;
but ye cannot discern
the signs of the times.

Then follow two stanzas, of the Galilaeans, and the eighteen men of Siloam, each ending :

I tell you Nay : but except ye repent,
Ye shall all likewise perish.

And then comes the Parable of the Fig Tree planted in the Vineyard. The Tree is nearing its end. The words are almost said, Cut it down.

Whether xiii, 25-29, belong here or not, the Great Axe is felt to be falling, and yet, then, in that very hour, the Pharisees came, saying, Get thee out, and go hence : for

Herod would fain kill thee. So they draw from Jesus the last words which "Q" gives of His :

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings . . ."

That is the second supreme moment of "Q." The other you remember, was at Luke x, 21, 22.

The reader will allow me to return to the passage Luke xi, 14-32, adding (on the authority of St. Matthew) Luke xii, 10.

You have, here, parallel passages in St. Mark and in "Q"—parallel but independent original accounts. First, St. Mark :—

In St. Mark you have (iii, 20, 21) "his friends" "went out to lay hold on him" when He was speaking in a house to the multitude, "for they said, He is beside himself."

And the Scribes, from Jerusalem, said, "By the prince of the devils casteth he out devils." Let us number the paragraphs.

(1) Is His answer, the Saying, "How can Satan cast out Satan?" 23-26.

And in (2) the answer is continued in four lines of a Parable about the Spoiling of the House of the Strong Man, 27.

And in (3) there is a Saying about pardonable blasphemies and the unpardonable blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, 28, 29.

Then (verses 31-35) there came His mother and His brethren "and standing without they sent unto him, calling him."

And (4) is the Saying, as He looked round on them which sat round about him, "Behold my mother and my brethren ! For whosoever shall do the will . . ." 34, 35.

(5) St. Mark gives a simple refusal of a Sign at viii, 12.

Turn to St. Luke and St. Matthew for another version of the same incidents.

(1) Luke xi, 14, and Matthew xii, 22. The Pharisees said, “ This man doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.”

Jesus answered with the Saying, “ If Satan casteth out Satan . . . ”

(2a) Luke xi, 21, = Matthew xii, 29. The Saying of the Strong Man guarding his Court.

(2b) Luke xi, 24, = Matthew xii, 43. The Saying of the Unclean Spirit returning to his house.”

(3) Luke xii, 10, = Matthew xii, 31. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

(4) Luke xi, 27 (not in Matthew).

A certain woman lifted up her voice . . .

Blessed is the womb that bare Thee . . .

Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of the Lord,
and keep it.

(5) Luke xi, 29-32, = Matthew xii, 38-42. The Sign of the Queen of the South and of the Men of Nineveh.

Here are two accounts, side by side, in the two original Gospels. Together, they enable you to judge of the tenacity of those early Christian memories.

The parallel Sayings support each other.

(1) “ How can Satan cast out Satan ” is much the same in St. Mark and “ Q.”

(2) “ Q ” has the fuller report of the Sayings: a complete quotation of “ the Strong Man ” Saying. And the “ Wandering Spirit ” Saying, which is left out by St. Mark, is a sort of Second Stanza in “ Q.”

(3) The Saying about blasphemy is explained in St. Mark. The difficulty of the distinction which you find in

“ Q ” ; the distinction made, there, between blasphemy against the Son of Man and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (which is the Spirit of the Son of Man), is explained in St. Mark. There, it is seen to be a misquotation by “ Q ” of the second line of the Saying as given in St. Mark : “ All their sins shall be forgiven unto the *sons of men*.”

(4) The passage in St. Mark about the “ mother and the brethren ” has its parallel, in “ Q,” in the answer to the woman, “ Yea rather blessed are they that hear the words.” There are surely very few readers who have not been puzzled by that interruption in Luke xi, 27. St. Matthew has left it out.

A certain woman out of the multitude lifted up her voice and said unto him, Blessed is your Mother : Blessed she that nursed you when you were a very little boy !

Mere Men have perhaps said to themselves, isn't that like a woman ! It is just some motherly woman who has got much excited.” And yet it is strange. How was it that her motherly heart was so deeply stirred by a Saying which is all about casting out devils ?

In St. Mark the story is quite clear. And, in the clear story, you can see why this collection of four or five paragraphs has got so fast fastened together and so fast held in that Christian memory.

It is a moment of decision.

All, you notice, are agreed that wonders are being worked. Jesus, and the Scribes from Jerusalem, and the people, all agree that Jesus is healing people who are possessed with unclean spirits. To a great many modern Englishmen it may seem ridiculous that I should believe that this was so. But to average modern people of other lands, or to average modern missionaries among Kaffirs or Indians or Syrians, it would seem equally ridiculous to doubt it.

The Scribes from Jerusalem, who would, no doubt, speak

with great authority in Capernaum, suggest the explanation of the marvels which they don't attempt to deny. Jesus is possessed by the Prince of the Devils and thereby has this power.

So the Scribes have committed themselves. They have declared themselves against Jesus.

Such a moment tests every man present.

Will he believe in Jesus, or submit to those authoritative " Scribes which came down from Jerusalem " ?

They could all see that if Jesus goes on He will be defying openly the Leaders of the Jews. Would that not be a mad thing to do ?

" When His friends heard it, they went out to lay hold on Him : for they said, He is beside himself." And then, a little later, His friends have brought His Mother and His brethren to help to dissuade Jesus from the desperate adventure.

Every man there must decide. Is Jesus doing an insane thing, or is He entirely right and true and sane ?

The multitude is in the valley of decision.

And they decide each in their own way. But two men, there, never forgot that intense moment. And two Sayings of His could never be effaced from their memories. One was that frightening Saying about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. And the other was that loving Saying, about hearing and doing the will of God.

I feel as though we had heard St. Peter and St. Matthew themselves, telling us what they remembered about it always afterwards.

St. Peter remembers Jesus' face. He " looked round on them which sat round about him." " He saith, Behold my mother and my brethren ! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." What did it sound like to St. Peter to hear " my brother " ?

St. Matthew has forgotten how that came in, but he remembers the incident, and the sense of the Saying. Some woman, taking sides with all her heart for Jesus and His friends, and against the Scribes and those whom the Scribes intimidate; some woman, as the news goes through the multitude, "His mother is here," cries out shrilly, "A proud woman may she be!" "Blessed!" And, indeed, all generations shall call her "Blessed,"

But He said, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it."

If anyone will look at those two passages, side by side, in "Q," and St. Mark, he will be able to measure a little, the kind of authority we have for believing that we do know something of the historical Jesus. It is a different kind of authority from that in which men used to put their trust: different, but not, in its way, a less true authority.

And if the reader will look into his mind for its most vivid memories, he will find that they are memories of moments in which his mind was made impressionable by strong feeling. Awe and sudden terror sometimes, and sometimes, love or a great gratitude make us remember. Both these emotions have been at work here. They both account for the tenacity of these early Christian memories.

XI

THE "Q" PORTRAIT

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

IF the Reader has been persuaded to put himself to the trouble of using those pencils, blue and purple and scarlet, which were commended to him, he will have marked as "Q" passages, among others, the following:—iii, 2-9, 16-22; iv, 1-12; vi, 13-vii, 10; vii, 18-35; ix, 57-x, 24; xii, 2-12, 22-34; xiv, 26-35; xi, 42-52; xii, 54-59; xiii, 1-9, 31-35.

Take these for an incomplete Collection of fragments of "Q" in St. Luke. The condition of them makes one think of the remains of some perfect Greek sculpture, broken in pieces, and we do not know how many pieces lost, and yet there lie the ruins of the original work, of more value than any Roman or Italian smoothed and rounded copy. Every recoverable fragment of that worn white marble is sacred.

These passages from "Q," then, are the remains of a work of the earliest Christian age.

Try, now, to imagine what it is that those fragments indicate.

People, twenty years ago, talked much about Apocalypses. This "Q" is the true Apocalypse.

It is apocalyptic: but there is no delusion, no hallucination. It is a vision of the Truth. It is perfectly sane and it is perfectly moral and it is perfectly terrific.

It begins as it means to go on.

John Baptist comes, and multitudes crowd to hear. He speaks words of fire: of Four Fires.

To the Pharisees and Sadducees—St. Matthew says it was to *them*—he says at once, “Ye offspring of vipers! who warned you to flee?” . . . That is the vipers on those sere hills, when fire leaps along from thicket to heath and from heath to brown grass, and the rocks are blackened and hot, and the air quivers and the ground is smouldering and the vipers wriggle from holes and clefts, “fleeing” before the flames.

And fire again, if the fruitless orchard tree is hewn down. That phrase looks onward from the beginning to the end—from Luke iii, 9, to xiii, 6. The Baptist says it first. The Christ, at his final separation from the Jews, says it again. “If it bear fruit . . .” Jesus said, “But if not, Thou shalt cut it down.”

Fire again in the words, “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

“And He shall thresh and winnow and gather the wheat into his garner; but burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

That is John Baptist. The violent man who prepares for the violent entering into the Kingdom of God (xvi, 16): none greater than he, save those who are actually entering by violence, now that Jesus is bringing the Kingdom of God among men (vii, 28).

What was that stir and movement, Christ asked, which made your hearts burn within you? Was it all a mistake? All about nothing? To see the wind swaying the rushes at the Jordan's side? Or was it some bland orator, courtly and popular, they had felt gripping their hearts like that? The man had nothing but his intense earnestness. A true man in a coarse coat. They had felt that; His fire; His truth.

Jesus was baptised by this man. And the Spirit of which he had spoken came upon Jesus. And then, "Q" says, Jesus decided how He would do His work.

In the wilderness, alone, hungry, but too intent on the choice to heed hunger, He decided. And the chief feature of the choice, in "Q," is that it was a deliberate refusal of any easy roads, any short cuts to success.

Whether or no the Spirit lied who suggested that there is any road that way, Jesus refused all short cuts. He will violate none of the limitations, imposed by the laws of human nature on all human work for mankind. He will work as man for men and among men. You do not know that those stones would have turned into loaves. The command was never given. And it does appear from history that it is a Lying Spirit which says that Power is a gift which a Lying Spirit can give.

And if the Jews had had their "sign," and Jesus had descended to astonish a Passover multitude in the Temple Courts, casting Himself down from the highest tower there, they would have no more seen Who He was, than they saw, when He rode into Jerusalem, meek and sitting on an ass.

He puts the Lying Spirit from Him. He refuses all false ways. As Man, He begins His work. He begins it with the call of the Twelve Disciples. And, with that, "Q" takes you directly to His teaching. His teaching is a putting before men of truths which thresh and winnow. Wheat to the barn. Chaff to the fire.

Blessed are ye who hear : who follow : who listen.

Blessed are ye, poor, hungry, in tears, hated.

Woe to you, rich, well-fed, laughing, popular.

Woe to you who love the world too well to listen.

Listen ! The old law spoke of regulating life to such and such a degree of Godliness.

But I say . . . And I say . . . And I say unto you . . .

The conventional religion that passes now is such an obedience to religious customs as the common conscience approves. I say, Obey with all your heart. Whether man knows anything about it or not, live in God's sight. That is being true. That is seeing life clear. That is being God's children. That is the only true life : sincere in deed : clear in faith : pure in heart.

At Luke vii you have the one remaining Miracle of "Q" of which any detail is given. It is told, it seems, for the sake of the simple clear faith of the Foreigner which is so great a reproach and rebuke to the conventional Jewish religion of the Scribes and those who believed in the Scribes, and therefore could not believe in Jesus.

In vii, 18, John Baptist is spoken of again. Even he, who was so true a man, is wavering. He must look and see what Jesus is and what He is doing : what Jesus stands for.

In ix, 57, the work is being done. Jesus is working, now, through His disciples. There were the three who were not single-hearted enough to go. There were the others who went. The directions show what manner of life and work and influence was to be theirs. Going out in utter trust in God, they were to restore God's order in the world's disorder, healing sick bodies, calming the possessed, bringing the Kingdom of Heaven near ; their whole life in tune with those sentences, " Our Father, hallowed be Thy Name, Thy Kingdom come," bringing God's Law into this world of anarchy.

At x, 17, they return, with joy. They have found that they went in power, going in His Name. And Christ sees in them the beginning of the hallowing of the Father's Name, and of the Coming of His Kingdom. They have been admitted into the knowledge of that Fatherhood.

They have been blessed to see : these pure-in-heart Children of the Heavenly Father. Through them the true life has begun in the world. He looks out across the world and says those words which men hear still, "Come unto Me . . . all the heavy-laden." This is the kingdom, the order, the life where men can have peace of heart. Now it has begun in the earth. I saw Satan fallen as lightning from heaven.

In xi, 1, whether in "Q's" order or not, you have an account of these Children of the Heavenly Father, single-hearted as children. Of their Prayer. Of their utter trust in the Father. Of their unhesitating confession of Him before men. Of their simple unworldliness, going simply on, as simply as Nature does her part : their life as free from care as the life of sparrows, lilies, ravens. No anxious forethought. Singleness of heart means peace. O ye of little faith, why are you anxious ? Fear not. Only be natural and simple and true.

But this naturalness, simplicity and truth of character will have to make itself good through severe tests (xii, 35). There will be a searching trial. A Temptation such as the Lord's Prayer prays against. Blessed are they that come through it and are proved not half-true, but true.

Think ye that I came to give peace ?

I came to cast fire upon the earth ; and I think it is already burning. I, too, must go through the fire, must be baptised with the Holy Ghost and with fire : "and how am I straightened till it be accomplished !" It will be division of "father against son and son against father." You must hate "father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, your own life," if love of them makes you waver or shrink back.

Count the cost. It is all, or it is nothing. Salt to save the world from rotting ! You are to be that, and that will ask for saltiness in the salt !

So He speaks to those who see the Truth. We have come to Luke xiv, 35. In that misplaced passage x, 14, to which we cannot now give its right place you are already looking at this same process of Testing, of Temptation. In x, 14, you find the antagonism between the Scribes and Jesus: the testing of the Scribes and the finding them false.

The contradiction is becoming irreconcilable. There are there, conditions which illustrate the Sayings of warning to the disciples about hating father and mother. The Scribes say, "this is Satan's work." Their conventions have been outraged and they are too conventional to see the Truth that is in Him. They side against Jesus; against the Holy Spirit; against God.

And the friends of Jesus, and even, perhaps, His Mother and His brethren, waver. It is a moment of crisis. It matters more than life and death. God is at work bringing a simpler world of healing and pardon and peace. And the old world is hesitating between God and the Scribes. Nothing matters, nothing counts, but to choose right; and to choose with the whole soul.

They who choose right are My brothers and sisters: Children of God.

At xi, 42, you have gone further. You are listening to a denunciation of the Pharisees. The fire of the original words still burns in the sentences which St. Luke has toned down as he copied them. In St. Matthew there is no toning down. Seven times, St. Matthew gives the words, "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

And St. Matthew (xxiii, 33) has words which recall the words of John Baptist, only they carry the threat a little further. "Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell?"

"I came to cast fire on the earth" and this is a fire that

torments, that devours : whether it shall refine and cleanse at the last, or not.

Then at xii, 54, xiii, 1-9, 31-35, you draw to a close of the warnings.

Woe to the hypocrites who will not look sincerely to see : who will not see the truth that " things and actions are what they are and the consequences of them will be what they will be." They " desire to be deceived."

It is a folly like the folly spoken of before, the folly of the man who built his house where he must know that the flood must come.

As sure as west winds bring rain and south winds bring scorching heat, so surely such falsehood must bring ruin.

But they will not look and see and acknowledge the Truth. They desire to be deceived. They are on their way to the court : defendants who haven't, and who know they haven't, a chance of acquittal : on their way to the court with the plaintiff walking beside them. And they won't own up.

Agree with thine adversary

while thou art in the way with him,

lest thine adversary deliver thee to the judge,

and the judge deliver thee to the officer,

and the officer cast thee into prison,

I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out
thence

till thou have paid the last farthing.

And in Luke xiii, 1-5, if a slight change be made—such a change as in other instances is seen to be necessary, if you would get back from St. Luke to " Q "—in Luke xiii, 1-5 you have a Saying which continues on the same level of warning.

Those Galilæans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices

Think ye that they were sinners above all the
Galilæans ?

I tell you, Nay : but except ye repent,
ye shall all likewise perish.

Or those eighteen on whom the Tower in Siloam fell,
think ye that they were offenders above all the men
that dwelt in Jerusalem ?

I tell you, Nay : but except ye repent,
ye shall all likewise perish.

Jerusalem approaches nearer and nearer to the last chance of listening to conscience and the simple truth. She is on the way to a scene of slaughter in all the temple courts and in every street like that scene of Pilate's among the Galilæans ; a scene of ruin as of every tower and house and wall falling as that Tower in Siloam fell, burying those eighteen men.

The words lead on to the one last warning, the one last chance of hearing : The Parable of the Fig Tree planted in the Vineyard. It bears no fruit. Also it prevents the vines being open to the rain and the sun.

So the Jews, to whom were committed the oracles of God, lived untrue lives themselves and had hid the Truth from the Nations. "Cut it down, why doth it also cumber the ground ? "

Three years fruitless, the tree is reprieved for one last year . . . "but if it bear no fruit, thou shalt cut it down."

And the Pharisees do not believe. They do not seriously attend. They are only scheming for their own political ends. "Get thee out, and go hence : for Herod would fain kill thee."

The confusion of the order in St. Luke greatly obscures this moment.

We read in Luke xiii, 31, "In that very hour there

came certain Pharisees, saying to him, Get thee out, and go hence . . ."

What hour was "that very hour"? It was when Jesus was speaking that final Parable and the words "cut it down" had closed the warning which John Baptist had begun three or four years before, that the Jews spoke their trivial words, trying to frighten Jesus with the name of Herod.

There is a note to one of the Suras of Mohammed to say that when a friend sorrowfully noticed that the Prophet's beard had begun to turn white, Mohammed accounted for it by blaming the Suras, "The Blow" and "The Inevitable," and one other. So awful had it been to compose their menaces.

Any writer, merely writing down extracts from "Q," must know a little of Mohammed's meaning. There is a horror of darkness in "Q," and a horror as of vivid flashes of lightning.

The Woe and Woe and Woe are like lightnings and thunders.

What must it have cost the Love of Jesus to say those words?

St. Mark has the same contrasts in his account of the same period.

"And in his teaching he said,

"Beware of the Scribes which desire to walk in long robes, and to have salutations in the market-places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts: they devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; they shall receive the greater condemnation."

But, in St. Mark, there immediately follows the scene of Jesus sitting down and watching opposite the treasury. And the poor widow came. And Jesus called to his disciples to tell them of her.

In "Q" the picture of the Hypocrite is unrelieved by any picture of the blessedness of the child-like and of the pure-in-heart. That fatal hypocrisy kindles our Lord to burning speech. I think many Christians, if they really heard the words, and understood, and spoke their mind about them, would say, Do you think it is quite Christian to talk like that?

"Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers" . . .

"Go and say to that fox" . . .

"For it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem . . ."

The Christ stands there with the Sword of the Spirit in His Hand. And you are reminded that the people who, in 1914 A.D., chose Corsica in preference to Galilee and took Napoleon for their hero were choosing the less true, the less clean-edged steel. So burning is the fire of Love. Its flame pales all other fires.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate: and I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

I suppose that is the second climax in the account given in "Q."

The first is the moment when the Kingdom of God's poor and child-like and true People is seen beginning to be realised. Luke x, 21. Matthew xi, 25.

"In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father; for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight."

"All things have been delivered unto me of my Father : for no one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father ; [compare Matthew xvi, 17] and no one knoweth who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him."

Matthew xi, 28 : "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Luke x, 23 : "And turning to the disciples he said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see : for I say unto you that many prophets and [kings] desired to see the things which ye see and saw them not ; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not."

And over against that moment of the beginning of the achievement of the Eternal Kingdom, is this moment of entering into the Trying, the Temptation, as you find men warned that it must come, for example, in Luke xii, 2-12.

Here is the Temptation. For the Kingdom is being rejected by Israel. They are refusing to be the Kingdom of God. They are declaring their war against it.

It is the Contrast of these two : the intense light and darkness of these two moments which make me call "Q" the true Apocalypse. It is apocalyptic but it is perfectly sane. There is no delusion, no fanaticism, in the words. It all came to pass exactly as those awful words said it must come to pass. The Pharisees and Scribes were hypocrites. And hypocrisy is the way of death. The insincere soul is a lost soul.

And He who could have loved those men and gathered them together "even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings" must speak to them in language like that.

He can take the little children in His arms and lay His

hands upon them and bless them, and an equal love is there longing to give itself to any grown man that will be single-hearted : and yet they cause this to be the only message He can give them.

That is the Tragedy that is being enacted here. Because He is so loving, so human, their untruth makes inevitable this condemnation, this which provokes and challenges their deadly hate.

In proportion to His joy over the blessedness of the true men, must be his woe over these false men. " Q " tells you of Jesus seeing truly life as it is. Things are what they are.

And that stern simplicity, that awful purity, can delight in the freedom, the fearlessness, the light-heartedness of the children who trust in the Heavenly Father.

They look out on the world in utter unworldliness, with such a clear straight look. They enter into the peace of the family of the faithful, and find brothers and brotherhood an hundred-fold what they gave up that they might enter in there. And, all about them and over them, is the Father's Love.

They have given up all else but this Love. And they have it. And it is Life.

But, in proportion to His joy over this blessedness, must be the woe of seeing men refuse it, and choose not truth and life but falsehood and death.

I think the men who have let us see deepest into the human heart, have told us that, in proportion as we can see truly, we shall see some such contrast. Among the poets, think of the man who made Rosalind and Beatrice and Viola and Perdita and Miranda,

" How beauteous mankind is ! O brave new world,
" That has such people in it ! "

He is the same man who has seen the ugliness and suffering

and torture of the world of Hamlet and Coriolanus and Macbeth and Lear and Othello.

Blake's Songs of Innocence have Blake's Songs of Experience over against them.

Little Lamb, who made thee ?

Tiger, Tiger burning bright . . .

Did he who made the Lamb, make thee ?

And Robert Burns ! Think of his tenderness and laughter and human kindliness : yet think, also, of his bitter sense of wrongs, of his resentments, his broken-heartednesses. Or only name Shelley. What rapture and light and burning golden mists and fire and loveliness, and what wild wrath against the cruelties and cowardices and wrongs of men !

It is the contrast of such lights and darknesses that is apocalyptic. And Christ has them in His Soul. He sees as no other ever saw. He feels as no other ever felt. He is Apocalyptic. But He is sane. You see how unclouded is His mind and how unbroken is His will, as you follow the Story into the Passion. Shakespeare conceived an intensity of feeling which frightens us still, for King Lear, say, or for Othello.

Shakespeare makes Lear go mad.

"The wonder is he hath endured so long."

And he made Othello take his own life ;

This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon ;
For he was great of heart.

We, in our turn, wonder that any man could have the perilous stuff in his heart wherewith to imagine those tragedies, and not lose his sanity.

But the Gospel tells us of Jesus feeling the strain of those contrasts, into which we look as far, but only so far, as we have eyes to see, and going on with a kind of calm. He saw the Truth. He saw through and through life. He moves among men, knowing. And they don't know.

When you come to that last night, not a soul understands, beside Him.

They remembered afterwards; and told how they had said "Lord, here are two swords." I suppose that was the most inappropriate remark ever made by man, And they remembered how He answered, "It is enough."

So little they had understood, what it was He suffered, and how He was to endure through it.

Perhaps we misunderstand, now, a little less than they did, the strange quietness of that answer. But we do not think that we can know all.

Now, in the last verse we have of "Q," hear the Love speak: the Love for Jerusalem; Jerusalem which killeth, and stoneth, all her true men—

Love for such a City, and yet what Love it is!

How real it feels! There is sometimes in speech what I may call a kind of nakedness of reality. The language seems to take hold of the very truth with its bare hands, so that it burns them. And these words feel like that. Such love and wrath! Such gentleness and Power! Such tenderness and such masterfulness, too! That Fox Herod! Ah! And my Chickens!

Compare some other intensely living words: Macduff's words about Macbeth:

All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?
What all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop—

Shakespeare has dared to use the same simplicity of language.

It is the same Speaker who speaks of the hen and her chickens in Luke xiii, 34, who, also, in Matthew xi, 28, had spoken of the oxen and the yoke.

Human hearing has not listened to greater words than

these. Yet they are taken from the cow-shed and the hen-run.

They tell in simple words of the contrast between the peace of the pure in heart, and the ruin of the insincere. It is a revelation, an apocalypse of the heights and depths of the human soul. And it was the fire of this Truth that He came to cast on the earth. And He burns with this fire. And yet so burning, He was not consumed.

"Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

It is only Love that can be so sensitive and so supreme : so burning and so calm. He is more Apocalyptical than Hebrew Prophets, and yet more sane than Sophocles or Plato or Chaucer or Shakespeare or Sir Walter Scott. Think of what He was going out to do, and of the Spirit in which He was to do it.

And they said, "Lord, here are two swords." And He answered, "It is enough."

Or watch Him again in the last hour, when He began to be amazed, and sore troubled. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." And yet, even in that agony, there is a kind of quietness of self-control. "Howbeit not what I will, but what Thou wilt."

St. Mark tells you, in vivid memories, of His bearing, His actions, His look and gesture, His words. "Q" lets you look into His Mind.

XII

ST. LUKE, THE GREEK

He healeth those that are broken in heart
and giveth medicine to heal their sickness.

INAMED just now Sir Walter Scott. I think if the modern reader loves Sir Walter enough, Sir Walter will help to illustrate the character of St. Luke, least Jewish of men. For St. Luke comes into the Bible, a foreigner in among alien people: a Greek among Jews.

Take one characteristic only, his quiet smile of irony. Think of the Psalms: laughter of joy, laughter of triumphant derision, but never a quiet smile. But St. Luke must have smiled as he wrote about the self-important ruler of the synagogue "being moved with indignation because Jesus had healed on the sabbath," xiii, 14. "There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the day of the Sabbath." How pompous and how stupid the man is! Dogberry and Verges are Churchwardens in this parish!

In the Acts: the Athenians—"all the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing." Acts xvii, 21.

So Philippi (if St. Luke is of Philippi) comments on Athens with a smile at its faded brightness, its stale wish to be always fresh and entertaining.

And Ephesus doesn't impress him more than Athens: Ephesus, the centre of the Polymammos Religion.

At Ephesus (Acts xix, 28) "they were filled with wrath and cried out saying, Great Artemis of the Ephesians

. . . and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together." They're a swarm of angry bees round that ugly Queen Bee.

Or there's the Roman soldier's letter to the Governor (Acts xxiii, 26). "Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix, greeting . . . I came with an army and rescued him having learned that he was a Roman." This "Roman" is the same man whom Claudius Lysias had bidden should be examined by scourging. Claudius has chosen to pose as a defender of the Roman citizen. St. Luke is silent, but not without a quiet smile.

And St. Luke alone suggests a smile on the Face we see in his Gospel (iv, 8-12). The reason for taking the lowest place; and again the real hospitality, "when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind" . . . there are sayings of St. Francis with something like that gentle humour: or Socrates says things a little like it. And that sad affectionate irony looks out for a moment in the most awful hour: "And he said unto them, It is enough." Lighter-hearted or sadder, it is such a playful good-humour as you find in Sir Walter Scott.

Or think of St. Luke's chivalrous care that the women shall be remembered, and their claim to gratitude respected. Or look at St. Luke's love of soldiers. It is like Sir Walter's love for Colonel Mannering, and Dugald Dalgetty and Ludovic Lesly, Le Balafre, and the rest. I suppose no Classical Historian has given us a touch about any Roman Soldier like Acts xxiii, 16. "And Paul called unto him one of the centurions, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath something to tell him. So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and saith, Paul, the prisoner, called me unto him, and asked me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee. And the chief captain took him by the hand, and

going aside asked him privately, What is that thou hast to tell me? " (I wonder whether the Nephew and St. Luke talked together of the scene, afterwards.)

What a gentleman! Sir Walter would have loved that officer, so friendly, so courteous to the foreign boy. We didn't know that Roman Chief-Captains were like that.

And how St. Luke sees good in people! He saves for us the story of the Samaritan who was a real Neighbour, and the story of Zacchæus, the Publican. Even Dives in torment thinks about his "brothers." St. Luke makes so beautiful the "woman who was a sinner" in his picture of her. The manner of this dismissal, says old Samuel Johnson, is exceedingly affecting. And the Thief on the Cross, has become, through St. Luke's story, a very different figure from that which St. Mark and St. Matthew gave us.

"He taketh up the simple out of the dust, and lifteth the poor out of the mire, that he may set them with the princes, even with the princes of his people." Nothing that is human is alien to St. Luke. He is like Sir Walter in this, or like Dostoevsky. And he loved the Greek islands and the sea, as Sir Walter loved the hills of heather and the lochs of Scotland.

And he is interested, if Sir Walter will let us speak of that, in debts and debtors.

And as to his writing, he has the same easy fluent style, not classical, but with something of the classical manner. He can smile at Tertullus and his pompous manner. But he can write a carefully phrased sentence himself, most unlike the sentences of St. Mark and of "Q," which, once, lay before him to be copied out.

And there is, for St. Luke, as for Sir Walter, a fascination in the Marvellous: so often, if a touch will heighten St. Mark's story, St. Luke adds it. It is a different treatment when he gets to the Woes given by St. Matthew xxiii, in

St. Luke xi, 37 and following. No heightening there, but a toning down.

"Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" St. Matthew has that, we said, seven times. St. Luke has "Woe unto you!" twice: "Woe unto you, Pharisees!" once: and "Woe unto you, lawyers!" once. Seven times he has left out the "hypocrites"!

And he has left out "inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity," and "ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell?" St. Luke writes, "Woe unto you! for ye are as the tombs which appear not, and the men that walk over them know it not."

And see how much more "Q" had said. St. Matthew has: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

The tombs, at that Passover, would be all, just then, freshly whited so that no pilgrim might bring defilement on himself—at that Passover!

We must, it is clear, allow something for the inclinations, for "the manner" of St. Luke in hearing what he says and yet it is clear that he is an honest reporter. I do not know which is the more startling, his gentle hands being those which deliver "Q" to us, or his daring to alter any word of that denunciation. At the moment it is as if some Musical Conductor tried to hush a peal of crashing thunder with a deprecating hand—"A little less emphasis on that passage, if you please!"

I said, St. Luke comes as a foreigner into the Bible. He speaks differently. He has a different manner from St. Mark or "Q." He is felt to belong to a later time. You can go over the same ground after him, following him as he copies St. Mark, and you can notice the changes he

makes ; the omissions, the additions, the heightening of one emphasis, the toning down of another.

He comes out of a larger world (as the world would say). The sea of Galilee becomes a lake when he speaks of it. Or compare the view taken of the multitudes who came from Tyre and Sidon in Mark iii, 8, and Luke vi, 17. To St. Luke they are people who come from "the sea-coast." St. Mark knows nothing of anything beyond their land. One is reminded that "the sea and the waves roaring" is in St. Luke. Luke vii, 25, speaks of those that are in king's courts as being gorgeously apparelled and living delicately. It is enough for St. Matthew to say that they wear soft raiment—most of us wear those stiff coarse harsh cloth, "abbas," I suppose. That "softness" says all that is needed.

Or compare the patching of the Galilæan and Greek clothes :

MARK—No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth

LUKE—No man rendeth a piece from a new garment

MARK—on an old garment :

LUKE—and putteth it upon an old garment ;

MARK—else that which should fill it up taketh from it,
the new from the old,

LUKE—else he will rend the new

MARK—and a worse rent is made.

LUKE—and also the piece from the new will not agree
with the old.

One speaks of tearing and waste, the other of colours that don't match. And when St. Luke has finished with the wine-skins he adds, "And no man having drunk old wine desireth new : for he saith, 'The old is good.'"

And St. Luke is not so much at home as St. Mark in the Sower's Field ; and the mustard-seed is sown (in St. Luke's Gospel) in the man's "own garden" : and again, the

people to be sent away when the Five Thousand come together in the wilderness, want, not food only, but houses and inns to sleep in, and so on and so on. They are very small indications, but the question, each time, is not whether they are small, but whether they are there. As to the time of his writing, there are indications of two kinds. One is what you might call a "reverential" treatment of the First Disciples. Not that St. Luke can be thought of as speaking otherwise than kindly, and with courtesy, of any man. But here you find a kind of tact towards the honour, a very special care for the names of these First Christians. St. Luke does not speak of the Lord's indignation when the disciples rebuked the mothers who brought their children. It is enough for him to say that Jesus called the children unto Him.

And he avoids any emphasis on their failure to heal the demoniac boy.

And he leaves out altogether the request of James and John for best places in the Kingdom.

He says the disciples in the Garden of Olives were sleeping "for sorrow": excusing them as he excused the boy Eutychnus when the room was hot and the Apostle's sermon was long.

And when St. Peter denies his Lord, St. Luke changes St. Mark's report to "Man, I know not what thou sayest."

Or compare the healing of the demoniac boy; or of the blind man at Jericho.

St. Luke tones down St. Mark's scene (Mark x, 46); he quiets it, makes it seemlier.

"Bartimæus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the way-side. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And many rebuked him, that he should hold his

peace: but he cried out the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me.

“And Jesus stood still, *and said, Call ye him. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good cheer: rise, he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, sprang up, and came to Jesus.*”

See how this has been smoothed down: its roughness planed away. “A certain blind man sat by the way-side begging: *and hearing a multitude going by*, he inquired what this meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And they that went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried out the more a great deal, Thou son of David have mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and *commanded him to be brought unto him.*”

The changes are not great, but they are for dignity and seemliness: Jesus commanding: the beggar in all his clothes. St. Luke has one touch of his own, however. Though he doesn't give a name to the blind beggar, there is sympathy in that “*and hearing the multitude going by.*” St. Mark made you see the scene. St. Luke makes you look at it through the blind man's eyes and not see, but hear. Sympathy doesn't need to “be there” to do that.

And, as St. Luke tones down what is undignified or noisy, or even not very creditable to the Disciples themselves, so he heightens the effect when he goes over the Miracles of St. Mark.

We spoke of St. Mark's “*immediatelys.*” St. Luke's are very different. His are for the immediate cure each time. He has left out the Blind Man and the Deaf Man who were gradually cured in St. Mark's Gospel: cured by such homely means, too. “He spat.”

So the man who "was a leper" and "kneeled," in St. Mark, becomes a man "full of leprosy," who "fell on his face," in St. Luke.

In the story of the daughter of Jairus, St. Luke says that the mourners "knew that she was dead."

The demoniac boy becomes "an only child." And so on.

These are cases where you have the original and the copy before you and can see the shades of difference and find in them indications of St. Luke's character.

But there are his own stories which he has collected for his Gospel besides, where you see what kind of incident or Saying he chose to keep in his memory.

Looking at the writing with which he has amplified the original gospel of "Q," you find the following:—

iii, 10. St. John Baptist and the multitudes, and the publicans, and the soldiers.

iv, 14. Jesus' sermon at Nazareth and His text from Isaiah lxi, 1, 2.

v, 1. The Call of the Four Disciples, and the Miraculous Draught of Fishes.

vii, 11. The Widow's Son at Nain.

vii, 36. The anointing of Jesus' feet, by the woman which was a sinner.

x, 30. The Story of the Samaritan on the road to Jericho.

x, 38. Martha's complaint against Mary.

xiii, 10. The woman healed on the Sabbath in the Synagogue after her eighteen years of being crippled.

xiv, 1. The man healed on the Sabbath in the Pharisee's house.

xiv, 7. The lowest place.

xiv, 12. The people to invite.

xv. The Lost Piece of Silver. The Lost Son.

xvi, 1. The Dishonest Steward.

xvi, 19. The Rich Man and Lazarus.

xvii, 11. The Ten Lepers.

xviii, 1. The Importunate Widow.

xviii, 9. The Pharisee and The Publican.

xix, 1. Zacchæus.

xxiii, 40. The Penitent Thief.

This is not an exhaustive list : but perhaps it is such a list as will best suggest what we are touching upon when we consider the contribution of St. Luke to our idea of Jesus of Nazareth.

It is in this catalogue that it is easiest to recognise what is our debt to St. Luke.

I suppose that it will not be claimed for him that his evidence is equal to St. Mark's as to what Jesus did : as to His gestures or His looks or His acts, or His miracles. And it will not be claimed that his evidence is equal to " Q's " as to what were Jesus' words, His Sayings. But there is in St. Luke's own portrait of Jesus something which depends less on vivid description of His acts and clear memory of His actual language, than on a general impression of how He felt towards men and how men felt towards Him. Here you find a sympathy with what was known to have been His way among men, His nature, His character. It may be that no one portrait could give all of one aspect of the truth of what He was, without failing in its account of other aspects.

Writers have spoken slightly of St. Luke's " pietism " and " love of the marvellous " and so on. It is more useful to ask what was it that he had the gift to see in the accounts given him by men who had been with Jesus, to see truly, and to set down in his Gospel. If the word will serve, let us call it a great human-heartedness, in Jesus. St. Luke has caused the human heart, ever since, to feel touched and drawn and won by that Loveableness and Lovingness which is found in St. Luke's picture.

XIII

THE ST. LUKE PORTRAIT

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

IN St. Luke's Portrait of Jesus, you meet the old dilemma. What man could invent so beautiful a Spirit? This (we may say) is too good *not* to be true.

Thirty years or so afterwards, St. Luke collected these stories, I suppose: and, let whoever will, belittle his capacity to speak as witness on any detail, there can be no doubt about the general effect. There is, there, a Character which has a natural sovereignty over human hearts.

At the beginning St. Luke sums it up in the scene at Nazareth:

"And he opened the book, and found the place where it is written:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings
to the poor:

He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord . . .

And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth."

The scene is chosen as one which will sum up what St. Luke is going to say, one which will tell in what light the

Christ will be seen in St. Luke's account. The scene is put at the opening of the life's work of Jesus, with that purpose.

Jesus is He who comes into a human world which has in it poverty, and captives, and blind eyes and bruised lives : a " human " world which is very inhuman, causing all kinds of aching, and misery, and shame. Men are wounded and therefore go and wound others. The world is full of wrongs. And " the Spirit of the Lord is upon me." Jesus is the chosen, the anointed Christ, who will give good tidings and release and light and liberty.

As you watch St. Luke's story, how is He doing that ? By being a perfectly human-hearted Love among men. It is a human heart that looks out to all men, to all mankind, from the beginning, in St. Luke. There, in the story chosen for an introduction (Luke iv, 26, 27), Jesus speaks of the foreigner, of the widow of Sidon and of the leper of Syria. We think, from St. Mark, that this human-hearted love opened by degrees, as occasion unfolded it. (Mark vii, 24. " Yea, Lord : even the dogs " . . .) St. Mark gives us the order more accurately, but he does not give us the sense of what this love was in itself, as St. Luke gives it. Trace that in St. Luke. It is human and goes on being human that it may persuade and win inhumanity out of its inhumanness. It is a love which must go on loving because it is love, whatever hate is round it.

It is the grace, the goodness to us, unearned, unmerited, which goes on being good because it is goodness : it is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ like the sun that shines and the rain that falls on the allotments of the unthankful as well as of the pious people.

As Jesus had said in that text, He comes with a Gospel, with good news to the poor. The widow of Nain, following her only son to the grave, meets Jesus. And when the Lord

saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, "Weep not." And Lazarus, laid at the gate, full of sores, hungry, insulted, among the dogs, is not always going to be like that, he is one who is going away to be comforted. If you see the truth, his wrongs are a thing less to be dreaded than the isolation, the ungraciousness of the Rich Man. The dreariest disease of human life is that want of grace. The real death is to have grown inhuman: to have become dried up into a lonely selfish heart. And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (the words were chosen by St. Luke's friend) is come in among men to heal that disease, to quicken out of that death: to do that, by being what It is.

National differences, inhuman foreign separations only challenge this Love to find ways across. It will notice that the publicans and soldiers were attracted to St. John Baptist. It will remember how the Centurion was fond of his soldier servant, and how open-minded he had been to his Jewish neighbours: like a British Officer or Civil Servant in India, understanding, respecting the race so foreign to his own.

The separation between Jews and the unclean Samaritans is only one more challenge to it. It is better to be a human Samaritan than to be a narrow-hearted Jew. So one Samaritan is grateful when the other lepers go away thankless. And another Samaritan is neighbourly when the Priest and the Levite left the half-dead man to die.

Dostoevsky tells, out of the ten years' experiences of his Siberian Prison-house, how the doctors are the only men of whom the convicts feel, that a convict is still a man to them and not a mere convict. And the doctor Luke can see the man in the Samaritan. There is even a kind of professional interest in these two "cases." One of a patient who was not ungrateful. The other of a neighbour who bandaged wounds.

Matthew x, 5, has, "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans." Luke ix, 54, has the story of the Samaritan village which refused Him entrance. There is much in "Q" (for example, those words "I came to cast fire on the earth") to account for James' and John's fiery question, "Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" But He turned and rebuked them. And they went to another village, though He had *wanted* "to enter into" that "Samaritan City." St. Luke has kept the story. It declares what kind of fire Love is: of how it can be misunderstood: the story of the misunderstanding by the Boanerges' and of their being rebuked stands in St. Luke, as a companion to the story in St. Mark of St. Peter's misunderstanding and his rebuke (viii, 33). You can see that it is the same Love, in those quite different ways, equally misunderstood.

And the sparing of the Samaritan village from even the least wish to do it any harm, is a reminder of what it must have meant to Jesus to foresee the doom which His own Jerusalem is making inevitable for itself.

Humanity cannot come to terms with inhumanity; nor truth with hypocrisy; nor love with hate. But love still loves. It is St. Luke who gives the words: "And when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known in this thy day, even thou, the things which belong unto thy peace!"

It is *as love* that love is wounded here: so deeply wounded and, though so deeply wounded, it is still love.

Such human-heartedness of love goes, wherever its wounded hands can knock at a door and get it to open, it goes healing, making peace. It goes forgiving its debtors; setting them on their feet again.

It isn't only the sad or the poor that He comforts. The bad, too, are touched and healed of their badness.

Luke vii, 37. A woman in the city, which was a sinner ; . . . when the Pharisee saw it, he spoke . . . This man, if he were a prophet, would have perceived who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him . . . I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven ; for she loved much : but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

This human-hearted Love can forgive sins. As St. Mark gives the Saying of Jesus, " The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins."

So you have this Love speaking (xv) " What man . . . doth not . . . go after that [sheep] which is lost, *until* he find it ? " St. Matthew has " and if so be that he find it." That is not the same thing. And " What woman doth not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently, *until* she find it ? " And, again, " While he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

It is in the same Gospel that the story is told of the Publican, standing afar off, who would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, " God, be merciful to me, a sinner." And there is the Thief on the cross. And, in xix, look at this Grace coming into the world of Zacchæus. Look how humanly the "unclean" Publican is spoken to. St. Luke has noticed it all, in his story. You are aware of the danger that Zacchæus is in. He's a very little man, and a man in a rather ridiculous situation up in his sycamore. He is a man who has an unpopular and disreputable place among men : and there is a great danger of his not being respected, not being treated with the good manners due to a man because he is a man, " for a' that and for a' that." And Christ sees

to that. "Zacchæus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." Jesus Himself will rest under an obligation to the little Publican, who was in danger of being despised.

It is in the same sense that the Sabbath observance of the Jews is felt to become an offence, unnatural, inhuman. "There are six days in which men ought to work: in them, therefore, come and be healed . . ." And here was a live woman, a real fellow-creature, who had been eighteen years crippled: "bowed together and could in no wise lift herself up," xiii, 11. It is the same feeling that you find in St. Mark ii, 28, "the Sabbath was made for man." Jesus came with His perfect Humanness to lead the sons of men into the life that men were meant to live. His coming was the "day of their visitation," their opportunity of "knowing the things which belong unto their peace."

As Jesus sees them refusing to see, He sees also where their refusal must lead. He foresees its end. I am not contending that St. Luke gives us the actual words of our Lord. If he worked on after 70 A.D., if he edited again some earlier collection which he had made before 70 A.D., it may well be that the words changed as they passed into the light of later knowledge. I have never, since 1914, read a book which could not be dated before or after that August.

Luke xvii, 34. "In that night there shall be two men on one bed: the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

There shall be two women grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

And they, answering, say unto him, Where, Lord?

And he said unto them, Where the body is, thither will The Eagles also be gathered together."

It looks as if it must have been in "Q." It feels like Our

Lord's own foreseeing of the doom of Jerusalem. But in the wording of the sentences, we can watch the editing of Mark xiii, 24, 20, in Luke xxi, 20, 24. You can see St. Luke changing St. Mark's "But when ye see 'the abomination of desolation' (Daniel xi, 41) standing where it ought not" into "But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies then know that her *desolation* is at hand."

And again, Luke xxi, 24, has "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

There he has left his original. And he has gone far enough from it, to suggest that it is possible for a Roman world to go on after Jerusalem has come to an end. St. Mark's words in chapter xiii do not contemplate that. The End of Jerusalem was to those who looked forward to its coming, the End of the World.

I am not contending for actual words in St. Luke. But who can doubt that the sense of approaching doom was the actual feeling of our Lord, when He was among men and found them choosing so wrong-heartedly, when He came and was among them in such a human lovingness. Their choice made the sequel inevitable. He saw that.

There is a very striking parallel in Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*, Book VI. The Russian has given fifty pages to a picture of a Russian Monk, the old dying Father Zossima. One can understand how someone has said—one who was himself a sceptic—has said of this writer that he was the greatest event in the story of Christianity since the time of St. Francis of Assisi. He has caught the look of Christian love and simplicity and joy and forgiving and shewn it looking out into the world through Russian eyes. It is the same Christian grace as was seen at the beginning. He is convinced, this dying monk, that the

hope of Russia lies in the old simple faith ; in faithfulness to that ; to that as the answer to men who preach Rights, and think that the way of freedom lies in successfully asserting them. The Christian faith is inspired by the idea of the service of humanity, of brotherly love, of men belonging to one another. And that is dying out in the world outside the Cloister. It is treated with derision. Man is creating new hungers, new unrest, new poverties, new selfish desires for himself. He is isolating himself more and more ; learning to care less and less for his brother-men. Riches grow in the world. But the joy in the world grows less. So says the Monk.

And the choice for Russia is whether the people will follow this way of this world : and cease to believe in sin : and think that freedom lies in having lots of selfish possessions and selfish pleasures of your own, whatever that may cost in honour and human feeling to others. The rich . . . and he speaks of the rich. And then . . . We see this same unnaturalness among those who are not rich. The poor drown their unsatisfied need and their envy in drunkenness.

But soon—he says—they will drink blood instead of wine. They are being led to it. That is Zossima's prophecy. Dostoevsky wrote this in 1880 A.D. It is, I suppose, separated from its fulfilment by the same number of years as separated the Lord's cry of "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," from the day when, where the Body of a dead Jerusalem lay, the Roman Eagles were gathered together.

St. Luke gives us the feeling which corresponds with the Mind which is made known in "Q." In St. Luke you feel the Love : you almost see the expression of the Face : it would be difficult to be quite patient with the kind of mind which did not feel that St. Luke is, in some sense, true.

"The heart has its own reasons which reason knows not."

Literary study is not wise if it forgets that Saying of Pascal.

We know our manifold indebtednesses to those who are what some of us are not, and wish we were, the Scholars. They are creditors to whom it is impossible for the Unscholarly to acknowledge their debts. We cannot even name them. And still we must be allowed at times to be so ungrateful as to murmur in our tents at one and another Moses. For example: I do hereby protest and mutiny and rebel against a great Professor of Yale and against the mood in which he speaks about St. Luke. I will quote a passage in order that I may say of it, "That is exactly what does not commend itself to me."

It is where he is advancing a theory of St. Luke as a man who "has a tendency" to recast the Gospel story into such a form as makes it clear that the rejection of Jesus by the Jews is due to a sort of predestinated perversity on the part of the Jews, a wilful blindness foreordained by God, in order that it might become proper for God to admit the Gentiles to the true faith.

The story must be so shaped that the Jews are seen always wilfully perverse: and over against them, to emphasise their perversity, people must be introduced who are the lowly and devout and who receive Him gladly. Whatever really happened, St. Luke "has a tendency" to tell the story that way. "Hence," I read the words of the Professor, "the peculiar hospitality of Luke toward material showing Jesus' acceptance of or by the humbler and the outcast classes, the poor and lowly, women, Samaritans, publicans and sinners."

And again, "During his career it is [men and women of Old Testament piety, quietly waiting for the kingdom of God] who receive and hang upon him.

"Even on Calvary *one* of the thieves must join with this throng of devout and penitent believers."

Now I will confess that when I came upon that last sentence, I felt as though my mind had been "stung" not by "the splendour of a sudden thought," but by some nasty insect.

No one could make a sentence like that while he dwelt among human things. It could not breathe except in an air of tendencies discovered in documents. And if you replace men by tendencies you must misread the Gospel.

St. Mark may have said that St. Peter denied the Lord because St. Mark had a tendency, which St. Luke had caught less severely, to undermine Apostolical Authority. He may. But, also, he may have said it because it was true.

And St. Luke may have said that one of the thieves turned to Jesus on the Cross because to say so would fit in with some tendency, from which St. Luke suffered more virulently than St. Mark.

He may. But he may have said it because he was told it was so, and believed it.

These tendency-theories are inhuman things. If they had any ears to hear and hearts to feel, we might say to them, "Do give up, for a moment, your fixed idea, and think. A man on a Cross will take a long time to die. He will know what the pain of hanging there is like. He will be able to measure the patience, if some one else is forgiving, in such a situation, while he himself is cursing all the world because of his ghastly pain."

If ruffians also are tendencies, pure ruffian all through, there will be nothing in any criminal that can be touched. But if a ruffian is a man, much like the rest of us, he will, we think, be touched by Him who came there and hung beside him. That is exactly one of the Miracles which *do* happen.

If it had been a question of parties, a sort of political election,—the Jews or Jesus,—I dare say it would be

absurd to suppose someone going over, in that hour, at that strange balloting place, and joining the motley party which included among the "poor" a very rich Publican, and can include among "pious women waiting for the kingdom of God," a cut-throat brigand.

I do not know that I should expect anything less than the grace which was seen in Jesus to appeal to that sullen heart in that cruel disgrace. But if St. Luke was right at all to open his story of the ministry with that text—

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor :

He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives; if the tendency to believe that, or anything like that, is a true tendency, we shall not need to account for the story of the Penitent Thief being there as anti-Jewish propaganda of the Pauline Christians. Who doubts St. Luke had "tendencies"? A tendency to admire Paul of Tarsus. A tendency to be a Greek thinking in Greek. A tendency to side with the "under-dog," and so on.

But you can see in his Gospel a predominant tendency : a tendency to be an honest man. He has altered the style of his original documents, "Q," St. Mark, as he admitted them to his collection of stories about Jesus. But he has let them tell their own truth.

And the story of the Jewish perversity, etc., which he is accused of having shaped into its present form in obedience to tendencies to which he was subject, can be found even in passages which he has toned down rather than heightened in copying them from "Q." The perversity of the Scribes and Pharisees is only clearer in "Q" than it is in St. Luke.

I have taken leave to imagine St. Mark as the Innkeeper's Son. And "Q" as the Writer who left the toll-bar to

become the First Evangelist. The mind need risk no such venturesome flights to imagine St. Luke. We have scenes in the Acts where St. Luke is found telling, almost without noticing it himself, where *We* were and what *We* did.

There is such a scene in Acts xxi: we sailed from Tyre, we reached Ptolemais, we saluted the brethren and stayed a day, we left next morning and came to Cæsarea.

And at Cæsarea we put up with Philip the Evangelist who was one of the Seven, and we stayed with him.

And he had four daughters, "virgins, which did prophesy." One of them was still living in Papias' day and told strange stories to Papias.

And we stayed there "some" days? "Many" days? And a prophet from Jerusalem came and prophesied "the owner of this girdle will be tied, as I tie my hands and feet with it?"

And Paul *would* go. And we saw we couldn't dissuade him so we gave up trying. "The will of the Lord be done."

And after these days we packed up and went on to Jerusalem. "Come again," said the four daughters of Philip. And they will come again, for two years, to Cæsarea. And some of the Christians from Cæsarea went with us and one of them was Mnason, of Cyprus: we were to lodge at a house he had at Jerusalem. He was an original disciple; one of the first: "archæan"—the word the Geologists have borrowed from the Greeks for the foundations of the world. It requires little imagining to recall the company. Questions ask themselves, what did they talk about at Cæsarea or on the road to Jerusalem? Did Philip, who had been the friend of Stephen, dare to talk about him to Saul of Tarsus? And St. Luke, did he listen? And what did Philip say about Samaria? St. Luke would like to hear of those strange people. And on the road to Jerusalem did St. Luke never fall behind with Mnason, the original,

the "archæan" Christian, making Mnason tell him things he remembered? And St. Luke was keeping a diary already: would he not make notes? "These matters delivered unto us" by those "which from the beginning were eye-witnesses"! I creep up behind them as they rest at noon. St. Paul had not always rested at noon on his journeys. They are under an olive tree at the roadside. The world is in a glare of light outside, but in the shadows some of the party sleep and some lie still in the stifling heat.

But St. Luke has got close to Mnason again, and St. Luke is restless. Will you, please, dear Mnason, he is saying, tell me once again, how that story went: the one you heard Him make about the ne'er-do-weel Son coming back? I want to get His words exactly as you remember them: I want the "archæan" words. What a loss, some day, if no one remembered them any more at all!

Ah, you will? How good you are! Wait, till I get out my note-book. For you know, dear Mnason, I have a tendency towards liking that kind of story. Germans and Americans and Englishmen will discover that some day: the Lucan Tendency. Agabus the Prophet told me so. They are going to say some day that I made it up. That is going to be the kind of miracle they'll believe in. But perhaps some of them, who aren't a great success in life, some who find they've done wrong and done harm, perhaps some of them in Germany and America and England will be grateful if I write that story down.

XIV

THE SON OF MAN AND THE SONS OF MEN

Surely He hath borne our griefs.

I HAVE been using words, all this while, about Jesus being human: trying to make it clear from the evidence which lies before men now, that Jesus is one who can be known to us because He was human. The Word was made Flesh. He was made Man.

And this although I am well aware that there are those who will shrink from such language. They will say, "Do you mean to say that He was only a man?"

The writer would not venture to say of any man that he is "*only* a man." There is an implied disrespect in such a phrase which has in it a great untruth.

It is a very great thing to be a man. The more a man is a man, the greater is he.

We speak of being "*only* a man" because we are bad judges of what it can mean to be a man. We lose respect for this "*being* a man," because being a man is a piece of work which we are accustomed to do so badly, and to see so badly done.

The truth is, that none other has ever been a true man, but only Christ. He only has been perfectly human.

I would not say that "He was only a Man"—I might say that He was the only Man that ever really lived: the only Man that ever was perfectly human.

There is something vicious in our thought when we put the word "*human*" to ignoble uses. We condone all the

unworthy things of which we feel that in the same circumstances we should very likely "do the same," by saying that they are "only human, after all": "it was only natural that he . . . or she . . . should do as he, or she, did." Beyond that, we class in another class the things of which we feel that we could not imaginably have done that! We call those, inhuman, unnatural.

But that classing of a moderate degree of selfishness, meanness and ugliness as "natural" is a great disloyalty to our human kind. Think what it would sound like if, when a man did something nasty or greedy, or cowardly or cruel, Englishmen said "it is only English for him to do that!" or Frenchmen said with a gesture, "Ah, well! It is very French, but what would you have?" Have we no sense of what it ought to mean to be a man, that we use the word "human" as though it were a word for what is rather selfish, or rather feeble? The Christian belief is that Jesus reveals to man what it means to be man indeed. We look into the records of what He was, we look in and in to the most original records we can find, and we look at Him and, here, we say, is Man come into the world at last: here, and only here, since the world began, is seen a Life that is Human everyway, and noway inhuman. "Behold the Man!"

We look at Him in St. Mark, and find St. Mark, as it were, correcting before they were made, the mistakes men made about Him, the false shame for His real humanness. St. Mark says quite simply the things which Christians shrank from repeating. St. Mark tells of Him as utterly human. We have dwelt on that.

And then "Q." There you see it all in another light; but, there, you might equally say, it is utterly human. Indeed, no other words you have ever read could equally tell you what was the tragedy of being utterly human in

an inhuman world. The simplicity, the purity, the lovely naturalness of a perfectly human nature, comes in among the untruth of all that is insincere and ugly and unnatural in our world, and you hear desolation in that cry, for example, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" What a love for the City which kills: which stones its true men!

And then St. Luke. The wonder and the beauty of the Character of Jesus, as you see it in the portrait of Jesus which we owe to St. Luke is its human-heartedness. The pagan said, "I am a man, and nothing human is alien to me." He *said* the words. Jesus lived them.

Why, then, do Christians instinctively resent what their first documents so clearly say? It is because, in the assertion, they suspect an implied denial. We need have no such fears. The more simply the assertion is made that Jesus was Man, the more inevitably does it lead to the assertion of the Truth which men dread to hear denied. It is in Jesus the Human that we can see the Divine.

We use the word "God" as though it were a word for which we had some one ready-made and clearly defined and sufficient meaning. And we have no such meaning. We have, by nature, a sense of the Infinite, and in that "Infinite" we are aware of some content or other. It means to us so much: it may be more, it may be less. Man differs from man in what "God" means to him. Man, as a Christian, learns to mean more and more, when he says "God." But always the fullest meaning we can give to the Name of God is the meaning we have learned to see in the Life of Jesus.

What do we know of God; of what God is? What does the word "Divine" mean to us? We cannot give any higher answer than by saying, "Look at Jesus."

"Jesus" is "Divine": and equally, "Divine" is

"Jesus." He was the highest that any human faculties,—senses, mind, heart, spirit—can know.

In Him two words of unknown meaning came to be full of light to men. One word is "God." The other word is "Man."

In the necessary order, Jesus reveals all that we can know. But, if St. Paul is right, the necessary order is "first that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual." It is the way of our experience. The natural is about us and we think we understand, we comprehend it. And then it dawns on us that the natural is spiritual, too. It is meaningless unless it is spiritual: unless it is somehow related to us, who are spirits.

More and more, man sees the spiritual in the natural. The world grows more and more to mean a spiritual meaning to him. And that it can ever do that, implies that from earliest, lowest natural beginnings, from the beginning of all, the natural was spiritual. If Spirit had not been there from the first, "moving upon the face of the waters," it could never have been introduced into an element which had no sort of congruity with Spirit. If man was evolved out of some low form of creatures, I will not despise and mistrust man on account of his low origin. I will wonder at that into which those low creatures could evolve. I will say of them, "See what they had it in them to become!" If man is made of the clay, are we not bound to say, "Wonderful, wonderful clay!"? The earth which men think of as "only earth" "had it in it" from the first, to evolve into Man. The dust (if you can so speak) had latent in its heart, asleep, the instinctive longing to be human. Mud always meant to be Mind. If the whole process is one, you must judge the beginning by the end.

The meaning can only be known when it has all expressed itself. Anything less than that, is not its meaning. The

whole creation is to be judged by that which it "cranes its neck" to see arriving. So the meaning of all existence is made known in the Word made Flesh. We look at the Flesh which the Word was made, and in that and through that, the Word speaks to us: we can know the Word. "The Word made Flesh" is the great Mystery. And by Mystery, Christians mean, of course, not a secret which no one can know, but a secret which has been made known to us. To Christians, Mystery means Light and not Darkness. Christ is the Mystery in Whom we see the Light.

There are other uses of the words "mystery" and "mysterious," but this is ours. We are not thinking of "mysterious difficulties": how anyone could be both God and Man, and the like, as though we had ready-made conceptions of what God is and what Man is. We are looking at the Christ. We are seeing in His Light. Christ is Man. Christ is God, so far as man can see God: can, with any meaning, use the Name of God.

No man hath seen God at any time. Jesus we have seen. And in our seeing Him, God was revealed to us. In St. Mark, the revelation, the new light, comes into the story in that consciousness of Jesus: Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased. The next supreme moment in St. Mark is when the Three Disciples hear, This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him.

The highest moment of "Q" is when the Lord says, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father; for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him.

Push your way back to the secret that lies at the heart

of either record ; it is declared in actual words to be this : The Son of Man is One who on earth implies the Father Who is in heaven. You are looking there, in that human life, into a mirror in which is reflected the Light of God.

And He was made Man : a real man : one of us : in a communion with us, as of man with men.

The Word was made Flesh : flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, mind thinking, heart feeling, humanly : only, it is to be remembered, perfectly humanly : so that He belongs as no other does to all humanity and to every human heart : and humanity and every human heart belongs to Him.

That is surely the explanation of all that we see as we look at St. Mark, or " Q," or St. Luke.

St. Mark and " Q " and St. Luke all equally, lead on towards the same closing scenes. We cannot then, leave St. Mark and " Q " and St. Luke without turning to that End towards which they lead—I mean, the Passion. The Passion throws a light back over the Life.

St. Mark consciously makes his story lead inevitably to the Cross. The sense of the coming Crucifixion gathers over his story, the moment Simon Peter has said, " Thou art the Messiah." Jesus is seen as One who is going straight forward towards it. Mark x, 32, for example : " And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem ; and Jesus was going before them : and they were amazed ; and they that followed him were afraid."

In " Q " it is not so much a series of acts which challenges that Jewish antagonism, as a process of thought by which that antagonism is seen becoming inevitable. The necessary result of Jesus thinking His thoughts, and coming into contradiction with the Jews thinking their thoughts, is antagonism to the death.

" There came certain Pharisees, saying unto him, Get

thee out, and go hence." He might have done that. He might have been put to silence. But if He did not hold His peace, there could be no other sequel but the Passion.

And St. Luke, using "Q," so arranges his work that he has made it as much the story of Jesus going up to Jerusalem, as his "Acts" is a story of St. Paul going to Rome. Eight times he reminds the readers that, while we listen, the story is moving, moving, towards Jerusalem.

So, all three accounts lead straight to the Cross.

Or think of how that Passion looms in Jesus' own mind : how important it was to Him : how He spoke of it again and again as He came nearer to it.

And then again, think of how the Church began life as the Society which remembered the Passion. Like the beating of a heart in a living body, so was that coming in and going out from their gathering together to break the Bread and bless the Cup. . . . This is my Body . . . This is my Blood. . . . Do this in remembrance of Me. It is Him as "having been slain" that they remember.

Is it not natural to suppose that all we have seen in St. Mark and "Q" and St. Luke was consummated and realized and expressed in the Passion?

It is the final act of Him, whom We have been watching in St. Mark doing this, and doing that : doing His characteristic acts which reveal His nature. The other acts reveal what He is. In doing them, He realizes Himself. But this must be the consummation of the revelation. The Act into which He puts His whole self : the Act in which, most of all, He is Himself. It is the last act of Him to Whom we listen in "Q." He speaks such a mind, as must think out its way to this. There is no alternative. He is the living contradiction of sinners. He must endure the contradiction of sinners, to the death.

And it is the final act of Him whose character we feel

in St. Luke. That human heart comes into a world where hearts were so unnatural, so inhuman, and what else can happen, would you say? He must, as we say, become heart-broken. Such love as you see there, meeting such hate: and with no protection such as selfishness and insensitiveness and hardness of heart can give; Love in all the weakness, the flower-like delicateness of Love, meeting that cold hard, Hate, and still continuing to be Love. The more Love is Love, the more unnaturalness, and inhumanity will feel the reproach of it and resent it and hate it. And the more these hate Love, if it is still loving, the more they will hurt and wound it. So, the inevitable consummation of each of the three accounts of which we have been thinking, is this Passion: the Dying on the Cross.

This is equally true of each of the three aspects of Jesus. We cannot separate and say, "had He been a teacher of beautiful truths only, He might have lived," or "had He been content to bear the sorrow and shame of men on that human heart, He would have left a moral beauty in the world, in some poem, perhaps, or prose, and would have died in peace, perhaps."

It never could be so. He acted and spoke and thought and felt as He did, with all His being. And because He acted and spoke and thought and felt as He did, because He was what He was in that world, the world took Him and slew Him, hanging Him on the Tree. The Church is the Society which saw that and remembers.

And the Church's order has been, first that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The Church's instinct knew the value of the Fact and preserved it in memory, with that twofold remembering, of the breaking of the Bread, and of the telling of the Story. The Church remembered the act and deed of Jesus, even while there is

still little said to explain it. He went about doing good and they killed Him. He died. We are the People who remember: the People who "do this in remembrance" of Him. He died and, somehow, it was for us.

But that act and deed cannot be separated from its meaning. It would not have been what it was, apart from the Eternal Spirit in which it was done. Through the natural the spiritual reveals itself.

What was it, that dying on the Cross? It was, somehow, "for men": "a ransom for many." The Church must look and look into the natural until that bodily act is seen as spiritual.

He died. He was scourged and blindfolded and smitten and spat upon and crowned with thorns, and nailed to the Cross and He died; those are bodily facts, but they have a meaning to Spirit: they mean, for example, cruelty. They mean shame. They are the contradiction of sinners. They are Hate taking Love into its hands and trying to torture it into being untrue to itself: Hate wringing it, if so be it may twist and deform Love, by the very agony, into becoming unlike Love and like Hate.

Do they succeed? You must watch the bearing of this Love to know. You must listen to what He says. Christians have ever since kneeled to think over the Seven Words that have been saved out of those almost silent hours of suffering.

Stop only at one Saying, the Saying St. Mark has kept: "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? My God, my God, why didst thou forsake me?"

One last time, I'll say, look at this vividness of St. Mark's detail.

A word was said which no one understood. And we are told of it. We have the very Aramaic sound. And

we even know, now, across the years, how someone misheard and misunderstood it, and thought it was a call to Elijah. And someone else ran and filling a sponge full of vinegar, put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink. And someone else said, "Let be, let us see whether Elijah comes . . ."

Strange doings, strange talk, but strangest of all that this should be remembered: remembered though it was not understood.

"And one ran . . ."

I think that Roman Soldier who ran without waiting for any order is doing what for all time will, without his understanding it, be infinitely significant. We to whom Jesus is the Lord of Lords see that movement like the turning of the balance. The scales tilt a new way. For there, all power is arrayed against undefended Love. That fatigue party of Romans working at the three crosses, is under orders, a Centurion's, Pilate's, Tiberius Cæsar's. They are a part of a great Machine of Power set to crush Love. The big battalions are against Jesus. And Love speaks in words they misunderstood. Yet something there did appeal to that one man: it was an order from a new Empire: it called: and he obeyed at the run. He is a deserter from Cæsar to Jesus.

Jesus used those words. We try to see what they mean. The explanation cannot be dissociated from the truth borne in upon men by all that is told us of what He was, in St. Mark, in "Q," in St. Luke. Here was One who was Man: Man indeed. And, in Him, Man is looking up to God and saying that! My God, My God, why . . .? See, He has become man, and nothing human is alien to Him: He is one with man: one of humanity: indissociable from the story of man.

He has entered into our human circumstances.

He has thought with a human mind and felt with the heart of man.

And He has even entered into that which separates man from God. Our human shame, our inhumanity, is on His Soul. He is one of us in this also. Our disgrace disgraces Him.

What can make atonement for man's inhumanity?

Can anything?

He said that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins. Perfect human-heartedness wins men back out of sin. Love redeems.

And you are watching Love doing that. As man, He confesses man's sin. The sin is there, casting its reproach upon this human life which He is living, and a heart would not be a "human" heart if it did not feel the shame as its own, when another shames our human nature by his sin.

It is because we are inhuman that this is hard to understand. We divide ourselves from each other: we are isolated: we harden: we are selfish: but Love is ashamed for those It loves (we know that) and the Love that is so ashamed and still loves, is the one power on earth that can redeem. The Son of Man hath this power.

Righteousness does not separate from unrighteousness where there is Love. They are not separated. They are terribly close to each other. Sin is wounding the Holy One all the time. And the Holy One is pleading with and pleading for the sinner all the time. They are close together, in most intimate contradiction. When Holiness and Sin meet they meet in a life-and-death agony. One only and not both can come out of it, living and free. Either Hate will kill out Love: either Love will say, "it is not my concern," "I will bear the shame of the thought of it no more," and so Love will die out: either that, or Love

will still be Love and give itself, all, in suffering, give itself to suffer the more, the more Hate hates. Love will give itself in that sacrifice of which something is seen among the loving people we know every day we live, the sacrifice of Love which is wounded in the house of its friends, which is hurt just because it is Love, hurt by others' shamefulness.

It is hurt. And it is still Love. And so it redeems.

Once again, our part in all this is much simpler than we commonly make it. We are to look simply at what is happening there. He is Man arriving at peace through that suffering. He is confessing our sin.

That is a Mystery. And a Mystery is a Light into which we come. It is a secret which we are being told. See the Love that is there, and you know that a Love like this must take upon itself and bear the great horror of the sin of our unnaturalness to Man and of our ingratitude to God.

It will bear that, through the shame of such a confession of it as will win its pardon. It will change it into a confessed sin. And the sin that is confessed cannot but be pardoned.

The insight we are given by St. Mark and "Q" and St. Luke prepares us to see One who when He comes to the full expression of Himself will be doing something of this nature. We could not have imagined for ourselves what that supreme and characteristic act would be. But here it is before us and we recognise what it is.

Here purity is purifying the vile by loving them, in spite of the vileness. Love is redeeming the selfish by loving them, unlovely as they are. Grace is winning human lives out of their disgrace, by being unchanged Grace. Man as he ought to be, is lifting up the fallen human race by refusing to be dragged down into any inhumanity. Men nail Him there to hang and die, in rejected Love. They

cannot drag Him down to their level. He is still the Son of Man, perfectly human-hearted.

What is the secret of this victory—a victory that we saw beginning long ago, which began we do not know where: in the carpenter's cottage and shop: in the streets and boys' school of Nazareth? How does He remain the perfectly human One?

We are let into the secret of that also. Man in himself, by himself, is nothing. He is a creature cut off from the sources of his own life, he is a creature out of its element, a fish out of its streams, a bird out of its air: he isn't living a human Life, unless he is living as the child of the Unseen Father. Jesus was the Son of God. And His teaching was that men must learn to be as children of God in His Spirit—the Spirit of Adoption whereby we know we are His children and pray "Our Father."

And Jesus lived in that Holy Spirit. Therefore His was the "highest holiest manhood." Here in Man, the Father can see Man winning his way through to the clear light of the Open Face: the Son of Man is perfected and is the Son of God, reflecting the Light of the Face of Father: love of a human heart reflecting the Divine Love: human gratitude answering the Grace of God.

How can any man distinguish between two natures here? We look into the Mystery and we see its Light. Herein is Love: Love such as all human hearts needed, because they were human: but never found, because they were inhuman. And the Love would have been less, if He had become less human, if He had been condescending among us and pretending to be weaker than He was, if He had been less really our Brother than He was, if He had been a Divine Actor playing a human part: not Man.

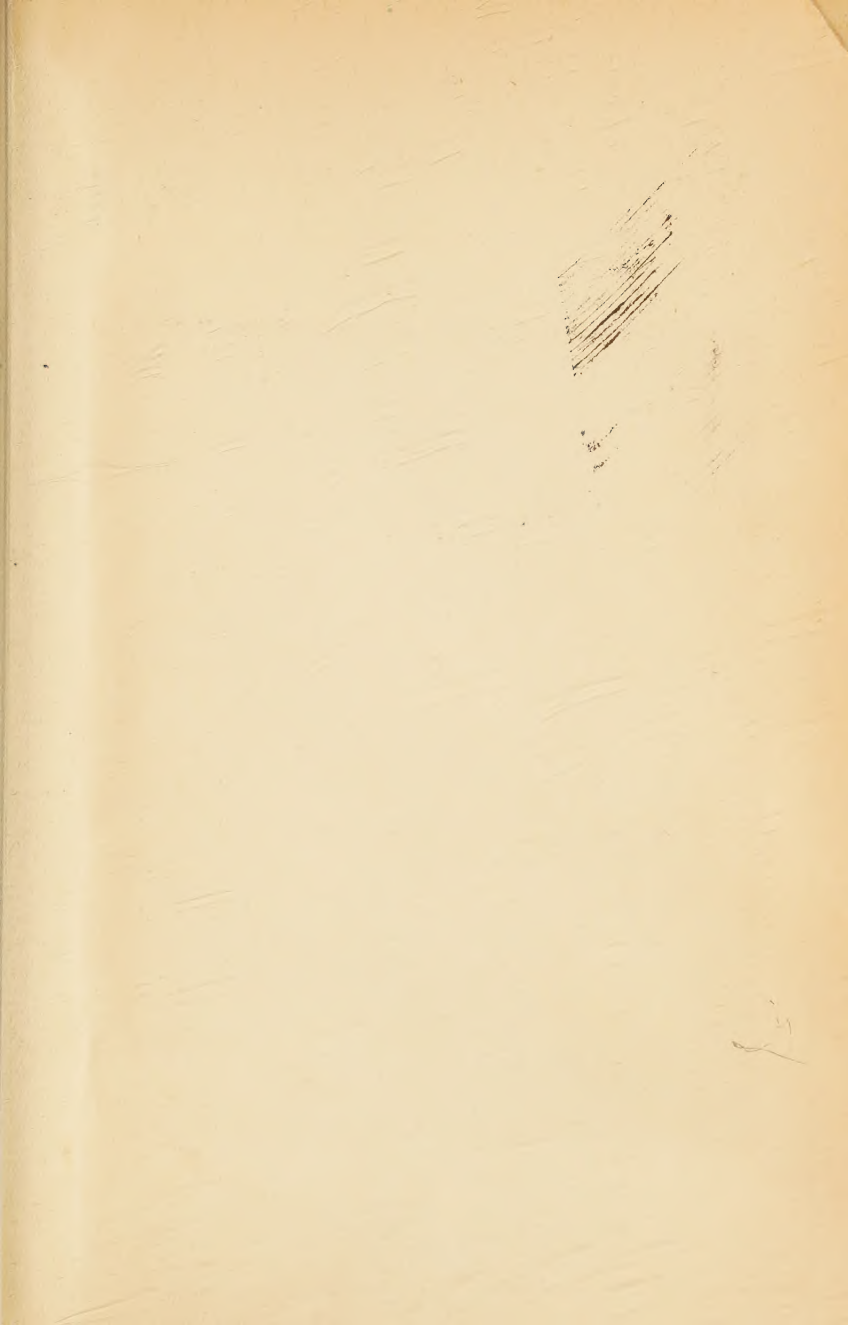
Let me get as near as I can to what, as man on earth, He was. St. Mark was right. He need not fear any

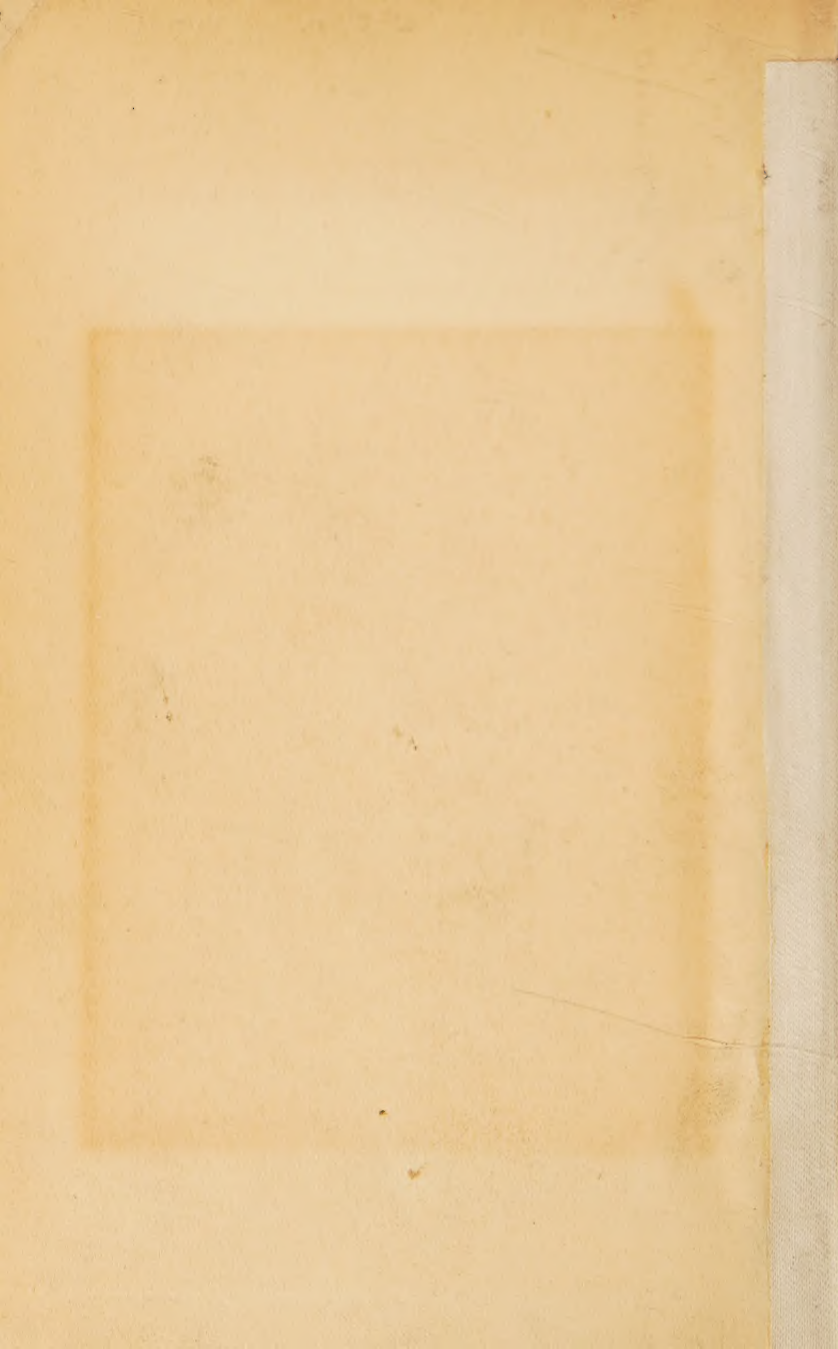
necessary natural human limitation. It was with a human will that He prayed in the Agony of the Garden. It was in human bodily pain that He endured on the Cross. It was with a human heart that He loved men, and loves them ; loves them out of sin and shame and into pardon and peace. That is the central act of all the history of mankind. The Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us (and we *behold* His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

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